ELHANAN WINCHESTER AND THE UNIVERSAL BAPTISTS

Joseph R. Sweeny

A DISSERTATION

in

Department of Religious Thought

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

1969

Don Yoder

Supervisor of Dissertation

Claude Welch

Graduate Group Chairman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INDEX iv

BIBLIOGRAPHY xiii

PREFACE xl

INTRODUCTION xlii

I THE BAPTIST CLIMATE: 1770-1800 1

II ELHANAN WINCHESTER: UNIVERSAL BAPTIST 18

III THE UNIVERSAL RESTORATION CONTROVERSY 63

IV SPREAD AND REACTION AMONG BAPTISTS 119

  Philadelphia 119
  New England 145
  South and West 168

V CONTEMPORARY UNIVERSALISTS 176

  Early Universalists 176
  Universalist Congregationalists 188
  Universalist Unitarians 199
  Unitarian Universalists 209

VI LEGACY 230

  Universalism 230
  Unitarianism 241
  South Place Ethical Society 246

INDEX

Acrelius, Israel 176
Alcott, A. Bronson 227
Aldridge, Adam 52
Allen, Beverly 172
Allen, Ethan 217-219
American Colonization Society 243
American Philosophical Society 200
American Unitarian Association 244
Andrews, Elisha 166-167
Annan, Robert 187
Annihilation 202-207, 238
Arianism 50, 67, 143, 172, 188, 214, 218
Atonement 63, 67-68, 79-81, 132, 134, 138-319, 143 155-157, 160-162, 179-181, 184-187, 192 195-198, 210, 215-220, 224, 229, 239, 241, 246
Augustine 195
Backus, Isaac 4, 22n, 23, 142, 147-152, 160-163 183-184, 192, 194-195, 242
Bailey, John 168
Baird, Robert 233, 238, 244
Baldwin, Thomas 163, 165
Ballou, David 216
Ballou, Hosea 58, 119, 146, 215-224, 238-239, 241
Ballou, Hosea, 2d 63, 79, 239
Ballou, Maturin 215
Barker, Peter 114
Barns, Thomas 146-147
Bedggood, Nicholas 26
Bellamy, Joseph 184
Belsham, Thomas 200, 205-207, 241
Benedict, David 1, 49, 142
Benevolence 70-71, 74-75, 77, 80, 84, 104, 120, 132 150-152, 161, 186, 188-190, 192-193, 196-197 204, 206-208, 218-220, 223-225, 228-229, 237
Berean Society 235
Bethel Baptist Association 167-168
Blasphemy 225-227
Bledsoe, William 168
Blue, Margaret 126
Boggs, John 91-93, 95, 97
Bohler, Peter 176
Bonnet, Charles 54, 177
Bossuet, Jacques 75

Boston Universalist Church 176, 236-237
Botsford, Edmund 30, 34, 99
Bowen, David 93, 124
Bower, Jacob 169-172
Briggs, George W. 227
British and Foreign Unitarian Association 245
Brown, Alice 130, 214
Brown, John 130, 214
Brown University 4-5, 39, 102, 130, 140, 157-163
Bryant, Peter 128
Buckminster, Joseph 221
Bush River Baptist Church 167
Cape May Baptist Church 118, 120-123
Cartwright, Peter 172
Channing, William Ellery 227, 243
Chapin, Lloyd 202
Charleston Baptist Association 6, 27, 33, 35, 95, 167
Charlton Baptist Church 146
Chauncy, Charles 106, 125, 148-149, 181, 187-192
196-198, 217-218, 221, 228, 236
Christie, William 242-243
Church of the Messiah, Universalist 240
Clarke, Richard 176
Clarke, Samuel 188
Clegg, John 49
Clegg, Richard 48-49
Collins, Abraham 104
Congdon, Pheve 128
Congregationalists 1-3, 43, 144, 147-418, 164
184-188, 191, 194-195, 221, 241
Conneley, John 93
Conrad, John 130
Conway, Moncure 245
Cowles, Giles H. 174
Cox, Nicholas 118, 124-125, 127
Crane, Elias 128
Cuthbert, Anthony 104
Danbury Baptist Association 139, 154-157
DeBenneville, George 91, 177-179
Defense of Divine Revelation 58
Deism 1, 40, 114, 117, 133, 135, 143-144
164, 172, 174, 191, 212, 227
Delanoe, S. 165
Descartes, Rene 75
Dialogues 32, 52, 82, 163, 197
Dissenters 48
Divinity of Christ 66-68, 218, 229, 243
Divinity of Christ Proved from the Scriptures 66-67
Dobson, Thomas 214

Drinker, John 91, 93
Dunkers 91, 166, 169
Eastern Universalist Association 147, 233
Eddy, Richard 53, 119, 202, 234
Edwards, Jonathan, Jr. 185-186, 191, 194, 221
Edwards, Jonathan, Sr. 160, 162, 184-185
Edwards, Morgan 5, 102, 122, 127, 130, 140-142
Emerson, Ralph Waldo 227
Endless punishment 12, 39, 76-78, 82-83, 85-86, 92 135-136, 138, 150, 152, 164, 183, 191 195-196, 203, 205, 216, 218-219, 238
Enlightenment 29, 64, 71, 75-76, 187, 217, 219, 246
Episcopalians 38, 97-98, 106, 111, 176-177
Evans, Caleb 134
Evans, David 118-120, 137-319
Evans, Griffith 107
Excommunication 17, 43, 62, 100, 102, 121-129 135, 167-168, 173, 216
Farmington Baptist Church 154-155
Fenelon, Francis 75
Fessenden, Thomas 194
Finite sin 70, 74, 79-80, 85, 131-132 150, 203, 218-220, 223
First Baptist Church, Philadelphia 5, 35-36, 40, 42-43, 45-46, 62 76, 86-104, 130, 141, 148, 199, 246
First Unitarian Church, Philadelphia 199, 242-243
First Universalist Church, Philadelphia 61, 113, 154, 167, 222 229, 231-232, 234-235, 239
Fitch, John 110-111
Foster, Dan 194
Fourth Universalist Society 239
Fox, William Johnson 245
Freewill Baptists 148, 164
Fuller, Andrew 213-214
Furness, Henry 243
Gadsden, Christopher 108
Garrison, William Lloyd 227
Gatchell, Joseph 175
Geffen, Elizabeth 244
General Baptists 4, 49-50, 52, 209-210, 246
General Convention of Universalists 222
Gill, John 23, 37, 51, 102, 140, 144
Giverson, Joseph 126
Gloucester Universalist Church 145-146, 176
Gordon, Elisha 101-102
Gordon, Samuel 175
Governmental theory of atonement 184-187, 194
Grafton Baptist Church 154
Great Awakening 188

Guyon, Madame 75
Hanging Fork Baptist Church 168-169
Harrison, Mary 128
Hart, Mrs. of Exeter 201
Hart, Oliver 25, 43, 87, 91, 93-95, 140
Hart, Samuel 201
Hartley, David 108, 204, 206, 208
Head of Enoree Baptist Church 167
Hervey, James 53
Higgins, Thomas 52
Hight, John 125
Hightstown Baptist Church 125-126
Hood, Abbe 128
Hooker, Thomas 185
Hopkins, Samuel 160, 183-184
Horseneck Baptist Church 15
Howe, Perley 194
Huntington, Joseph 163-164, 194-197, 227
Huntington, William 165
Huxley, Julian 246
Hyde, Jonathan 20
Independent Society of Unitarian Christians 243
Infidelity 63, 64, 114-117, 133, 143
157, 166-167, 211, 213-214
Infinite sin 85, 132, 150, 195, 203
Jacobstown Baptist Church 129-130
Jaffrey Baptist Church 146
Jaffrey Universalist Society 146
Jansenists 75
Jay, John 61
Jemson, Jacob 125
Jemson, Rebeccah 125-216
Jesuits 75
Jones, David 95, 123, 135
Jones, Horatio Gates 13
Jones, Samuel 43-44, 90-91, 95, 123, 134-139, 156-157
Jones, Thomas 61, 234
Kendrick, Ariel 165
Kent and Sussex Association 209
Kentucky Baptist Association 169
Kentucky Universalists 168-172
Kings Chapel 240
Kingwood Baptist Church 118, 124
Kinney, Joseph 153
Knapp, Jacob 173
Kneeland, Abner 222-227, 232, 234-235, 239
Knowles, Maria 56-58
Lathe, Zephaniah 154
Lectures on the Prophecies that Remain to be Fulfilled 81, 106

Leibnitz, Gottfried Wilhelm 75
Leland, John 24-25, 28, 142-144, 167
Levering, Griffith 93
Lewis, Thomas 129
Liberty 59, 114-116, 219
Licentiousness 84, 115, 131, 139, 152, 166, 170, 238
Limited punishment 37, 54, 63, 74, 77-80, 82-83, 85-86, 106, 124, 135-139, 150, 161, 164, 182, 189-190, 193-194, 197, 203-208, 211, 216, 219-220, 223, 228, 235, 238-239
Lindsey, Theophilus 199-200, 208
Locke, John 75, 144, 149, 188, 223
London Confession 6, 49
Luke, Sarah 26
Lyon, Ebenezer 22
Lyons Farm Baptist Church 127-129
Malebranche, Nicolas 75
Mann, Jacob 194
Manning, James 4, 39, 43, 102, 140-141, 154, 158, 161
Marshall, Christopher 104-105, 108-110, 114
Mason's Lodge 104, 112, 234
Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists 237-238
Maxcy, Jonathan 157-163
Mayhew, Jonathan 188, 192-194
McClean, Duncan 118, 167
McKim, John 88-89, 93-94, 99, 101
McLoughlin, William 153
Mead, Samuel 194
Mendon Association 144
Merriam, Ezekiel 89-90, 93
Methodists 1, 148, 172, 179, 182, 236
Middleton, Edward 93
Middletown Baptist Church 13, 123, 126
Miles, Samuel 91, 93, 95, 99, 101
Mitchell, Edward 221
Morias, Herbert 18
Moravians 176
Morgan, Abel 13, 43
Morgan, Mary 43
Morgan, Samuel 123
Morse, Jedidiah 111
Morse, William 235
Mortimer, H. W. 56, 57
Mulford, Esther 128
Muller, Peter 176
Murden, Thomas 128
Murray, John 46, 78-79, 101, 104, 108, 112-113, 118-119, 126, 129, 144-149, 154, 175, 181-183, 187, 192, 221, 227

Murray, Noah 153-154, 234
Mystic's Plea for Universal Redemption 76-77, 81
Natural religion 73, 79, 85, 116, 189, 192, 202-203, 208, 225-226
Natural rights 29
New Jersey Baptists 7, 119-120
New Mills Baptist Church 130
Newton, Isaac 75
New York Universalist Association 233
Northern Universalist Association 233
O'Kelly, James 172
Old South Church 241
Oration on the Discovery of America 60
Osborn, Abner 127, 129
Outcasts Comforted 48, 103, 176
Ovington, W. 128
Owen Robert Dale 224
Oxford Conventions 47-48, 182, 217
Paine, Tom 58, 64, 68, 116
Palmer, Elihu 110-112
Park Street Congregational Church 241
Park, Moses 153
Parker, Theodore 227
Parliament Court Chapel 52, 61, 210, 245
Particular Baptists 6, 49-51, 78, 209, 213, 215
Peck, Sarah 25-27
Pennsylvania Abolition Society 243
Pennsylvania State Universalist Convention 234-235
Petitpierre, Ferdinand 177, 197, 217-218
Philadelphia Baptist Association 5-17, 33, 35, 40, 43, 86-87, 90-91, 94, 96, 98, 100-101, 120-125, 127, 134-136, 139-140, 155, 167, 246
Philadelphia Baptist Confession 6-17, 62, 94, 97
Philadelphia Union Association 233-234
Philadelphia Universalist Association 233
Philadelphia Universalist Confession 229-231, 235-236
Philadelphia Universalist Convention 118, 229-231
Pillsbury, Edmund 154
Pitman, John 87
Pittsgrove Baptist Church 118, 122-123
Plain Political Catechism 28, 58, 63-64
Plan of Union 7
Poiret, Pierre 75
Portsmouth Universalist Society 236
Potter, Thomas 144-145
Powell, Joseph 90, 93, 95
Prentice, Nathaniel 101-102
Presbyterians 29, 51, 98, 105-106, 110, 191-192

Price, Richard 106
Priestley, Joseph 60-61, 160, 198-208, 217-218, 228, 240, 242
Prince Street Universalist Society 223, 232
Princeton University 105
Process and Empire of Christ 210
Protestors 43, 88-91, 93-101, 103
Pugh, Evan 35
Quakers 97-98, 104, 108
Quietism 75
Ramsay, Chevalier 75-77, 79, 81
Rapp, George 175
Redman, John 104-105
Reigning Abominations 30-31
Religious liberty 11, 27-29, 34, 60
Relly, James 113, 118-119, 122, 144, 146 148-149, 154, 165, 179-181, 183-185 187, 192, 195-197, 220-221, 227-228
Republican Methodist Church 172
Resurrection 63, 68, 159, 204, 206-207, 225-226
Restitution of All Things Defended 78
Reuz, Matthew 176
Revelation 63-66, 75, 113, 115-116, 136, 151 210, 212, 218, 221-222, 229, 237
Reynolds, Gamaliel 153
Rhode Island College 4-5, 39, 102, 130, 140, 157-163
Rich, Caleb 146, 215
Richmond Universalist Society 146
Ripley, George 227
Rippon, John 102, 140-141, 154, 161
Ritchie, Elizabeth 55
Robins, Ezekiel 123
Rodney, Thomas 176-177
Rogers, Alice 21, 22
Rogers, William 5, 76, 87, 90, 93-94, 101-103 130, 141-142, 161, 199-200
Roman Catholicism 124, 133
Rush, Benjamin 51, 55-56, 104-107, 113, 209
St. David's Society 35
Salem Baptist Church 126-127
Salisbury Baptist Association 6
Sarjent, Abel 109, 130, 214-215, 232, 236
Say, Thomas 104
Seagraves, Artis 118, 120-123, 127, 134
Second Coming 63, 69
Second Universalist Church, Philadelphia 232, 235, 239
Second Universalist Society, New York 223-224, 232
Seed of the Woman Bruising the Serpent's Head 44, 70, 75, 131-132
Separate Baptists 4, 8, 144, 146, 148, 153, 168, 174
Separates 2-4, 20, 24, 147, 153

Serjant, John 126
Seward, John 107
Shaftsbury Baptist Association 143
Shakers 1, 148
Shaw, Benjamin 101
Shepard, Samuel 165
Shields, Thomas 88-89, 93, 99, 101
Siegvolck, Paul 37-38, 71-72, 77, 79, 81-83, 106, 108, 177
Sister Harrison 127
Slavery 30-34, 53, 231-232, 238, 243
Smalley, John 184-185, 194
Smith, Elias 163-165
Smith, Hezekiah 163
Smith, William Pitt 232
Society of Congregation of Protest Dissenters 246
Society of Free Enquirers 225
Society of Universal Baptists 46-48, 98, 103-114, 246
Society of Universalists in Kentucky 168
Socinianism 50, 111, 143, 162, 188, 213-214, 218
South Place Ethical Society 210, 245-246
Southern Universalist Association 224
Spaulding, Josiah 197-198
Spinoza, Baruch 75
Stacy, Nathaniel 237
Stancliff, John 123-124
Stennett, Samuel 154
Stephens, Joseph 127
Stiles, Ezra 22, 42
Stillman, Samuel 163, 165
Stone, Edwin Martin 18, 53
Stonehouse, George 40, 53-54, 106, 108, 236
Stonhouse, James 53n, 177
Stonington Baptist Association 6
Streeter, Adam 145-146
Strong, Nathan 61, 196-197, 221
Summers, Susanna 167
Sunday School 234-235
Supporters 90-93, 95-99
Taylor, Dan 51, 78
Taylor, John 188
Ten Letters to Tom Paine 116
Tennent, Gilbert 100
Third Universalist Society, Boston 165
Thomas, Abel 118, 234, 239
Thomas David 131-133
Toulmin, Harry 241-242
Toulmin, Joshua 50, 241
Transylvania College 241
Trinity 79, 210, 213-214, 218, 229, 235, 239, 246

Turner, Edward 217
Tyler, John 176
Union Universalist Association 233
Unitarians 50, 60-61, 130, 146, 174-175, 188, 192, 198-208, 210, 212-218, 220-222, 227-228, 236, 238-239, 240-246
Unitarian-Universalist Association 244
Universalist Church of America 244
Universalist Societies of England 48-49, 213
University of Pennsylvania 45, 90, 98, 103, 105, 107, 130, 199
Upper Freehold Baptist Church 127
Ustich, Thomas 101, 194
Vane, Henry 175
Vanhorn, William 91, 95, 123
Vidler, William 49, 52, 61, 83, 208-213, 228, 245
Virginia Baptist Association 167
Virginia Baptists 7, 28, 167
Wade, Betsy 128-129
Wade, Jothan 127-129
Ware, Henry 241
Warren Baptist Association 4, 35, 45, 86087, 146, 153-154, 162
Warwick Universalist Society 146
Washington, George 47
Watkins, Joseph 101
Webster, Samuel 188
Welsh Neck Baptist Church 25-35, 37, 39, 99
Wesley, Charles 53
Wesley, John 53-56, 144-145, 187
West, Stephen 186-187, 194
Westcott, George 94
Western Universalist Association 233, 237
Westminster Confession 6
Whiston, William 188
White, Jeremiah 106, 175
White, William 111
Whitefield, George 2, 4, 50, 53, 144-145, 187
Whiting, Samuel 194
Whittemore, Thomas 225-226
Wilson, Joseph 52
Winchester Confession 236-237
Winchester Convention 236-237
Winchester, Moses 110, 118
Worcester, Noah 1
Worth, William 118, 122-124, 127, 134
Wright, Frances 224
Yancey, Robert 176
Young, Joseph 197, 232

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

An Address from the Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, to their Sister Churches of the Same Denomination throughout the Confederated States of North America. Drawn up by a Committee of the Church Appointed for Said Purpose. Philadelphia: Printed by Robert Aitkin, at Pope's Head, Three Doors above the Coffee House, in Market Street, 1781.

Allen, Ethan. Reason the Only Oracle of Man, or a Compenduous System of Natural Religion. Alternately Adorned with Confutations of a Variety of Doctrines Incompatible to it; Deduced from the Most Exalted Ideas which we are able to form of the Divine and Human Characters, and from the Universe in General. Bennington, Vermont: Printed by Hoswell and Russell, 1784.

Andrews, Elisha. Candid Examination of the Moral Tendency of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation as Taught by its Advocates. Boston: Manning and Loring, 1803.

Annan, Robert. Brief Animadversions on Doctrine of Universal Salvation. In which it is Proved to be Utterly Repugnant to the Principles of Moral Government and Inconsistent with the Word of God. Philadelphia: Printed by R. Aitkin and Son, 1787.

Articles of Faith of the First Independent Church of Christ, Believing in the Salvation of All Men, to which are Signed the Names of Members of it. Philadelphia, 1818. Ms, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Articles of Incorporation of the First Independent Church of Christ. Copied from the one in Possession of Will Smith by Order of the Church. Tesse Roe Burden, Sec.y. Philadelphia, 1818. Ms, HSP.

Backus, Isaac. The Atonement of Christ, Explained and Vindicated, Against Late Attempts to Exclude it out of the World. Boston: Printed by Samuel Hall, 1787.

________. The Doctrine of Universal Salvation Examined and Refuted. Containing, a Concise and Distinct answer to the Writings of Mr. Relly, and Mr. Winchester, upon that Subject. Providence: Printed and Sold by John Carter, 1782.

________. Letter to Thomas Ustick. Middleborough, June 3, 1796. Ms, HSP.

Ballou, Hosea. The Eleven Sermons, which were Preached by the Rev. Hosea Ballou, Minister of the Second Universalist Church in Boston, (Mass.) during a Visit to Philadelphia in the months of December and January, 1821-2; Ten of which were Preached at the Universalist Church, in Lombard Street, and the last in the Saloon of the Washington Hall. To which are added Critical and Explanatory Notes, by the Rev. Abner Kneeland. Philadelphia: Published by Edwin T. Scott, 1822.

________. A Lecture Sermon, Delivered in the Second Universalist Meeting House, in Boston, on the evening of the First Sabbath in December, 1819. Boston: Published by Henry Bowen, 1819.

________. Letter to Rev. Joseph Buckminster, January 11, 1810. Ms, HSP.

________. A Sermon, Delivered at the Second Universalist Meeting House, in Boston. Boston: Published by Henry Bowen, 1819.

________. Sermons on Important Doctrinal Subjects. To which are added Critical and Explanatory Notes. Together with a Brief Memoir of the Author, written by Himself. Boston: Printed and published at the Trumpet Office, 1832.

________. "The Teachings of Jesus Christ," in The Universalist Quarterly, Vol. VI, Boston: A. Tompkins, 1849.

________. A Treatise on Atonement; in which the Finite Nature of Sin is Argued, its Cause and Consequences as such; the Necessity and Nature of Atonement, and its Glorious Consequences, in the Final Reconciliation of All Men to Holiness and Happiness. 6th ed. Boston: A. Tompkins, 1852.

Ballou, Hosea, and Ballou, Hosea, 2d, editors. The Universalist Expositor. 2 vols. New York: Z. Baker, 1846.

Bath-Kol: A Voice from the Wilderness. Being an Humble Attempt to Support the Sinking Truths of God, against some of the Principal Errors, Raging at this time. Or, a Joint Testimony to some of the grand articles of the Christian Religion, Judicially Delivered to the Churches under their Care. By the First Presbytery of the Eastward. Boston: Printed by N. Coverly, 1783.

Belsham, Thomas. Memoirs of the late Reverend Theophilus Lindsey, M.A. Including a Brief Analysis of his Works; together with Anecdotes and Letters of Eminent persons, his friends, and correspondents: also a General View of the Progress of the Unitarian Doctrine in England and America. London: Williams and Northgate, 1873.

A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom, Printed for the Consideration of the People. Ms, HSP.

Bennet, Charles. Conjectures Concerning the Nature of Future Happiness. Translated from the French. York: W. Blanchard and Co., 1785.

Booth, Abraham. Divine Justice Essential to the Divine Character. A Sermon Preached in Mr. Timothy Thomas's meeting-house, near Devonshire-Square, at the Baptist Monthly Meeting, September 22, 1803. London: Printed by C. Whittingham, for the author, 1804.

________. Glad Tidings to Perishing Sinners: or, the Genuine Gospel a Complete Warrant for the Ungodly to Believe in Jesus. Philadelphia: Printed by Stephen C. Ustick, 1797.

Broaddus, Andrew. The Age of Reason and Revelation; or Animadversions on Mr. Thomas Paine's Late Piece, Intitled "The Age of Reason." Richmond: John Dixon, 1795.

Butterfield, L. H., editor. Letters of Benjamin Rush. Princeton: Published for American Philosophical Society by Princeton University Press, 1951.

Cape May Court House Baptist Church. Letter to the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1790. New Jersey Historical Society, Ms file no. 259.

Cartwright, Peter. The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright. Edited by W. P. Strickland. Seventeenth Thousand. New York: Published by Carlton and Porter, 1857.

Charleston Baptist Association, Charlestown, South Carolina. A Summary of Church Discipline. Showing the Qualifications and Duties of the Officers and Members, of a Gospel-Church. Wilmington: Printed by James Adams, 1783.

Chauncy, Charles. All Nations of the Earth Blessed in Christ; the Seed of Abraham. A Sermon Preached at Boston, at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Joseph Bowman, to the Work of the Gospel-Ministry, more expecially among the Mohawk-Indians, on the Western Borders of New England. August 31, 1762. Boston: Printed and Sold by John Draper, 1762.

________. The Benevolence of the Deity, Fairly and Impartially Considered. Boston: Printed by Powars and Willis, 1784.

________. The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations, made Manifest by the Gospel-Revelation: Or, the Salvation of All Men the Grand Thing Aimed at in the Scheme of God, as opened in the New-Testament Writings, and Entrusted with Jesus Christ to bring into Effect. By one who wishes well to the Whole Human Race. London: Printed for Charles Dilly, in the Poultry, 1784.

Christian Messenger, Devoted to Doctrine, Religion, and Morality. Edited by Abner Kneeland. Philadelphia: Printed for the Proprietors, 1819-1821.

Clarke, Richard. The Prophetic Numbers of David and John Calculated; In Order to show the time, when the Day of Judgment for this First Age of the Gospel, is to be Expected: and the Setting Up of the Milenial kingdom of Jehovah and his Christ. 2nd ed. with additions. Charles-Town, South Carolina: Printed by Peter Timothy, 1759.

A Confession of Faith, Put Forth by the Elders and Brethren of many Congregations of Christians (Baptized upon Profession of their Faith) In London and the Country. Adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, September 25, 1742. The 6th ed. To which are added, Two Articles *viz.* Of Imposition of Hands and Singing of Psalms in Publick Worship. Also A Short Treatise on Church Discipline. Philadelphia: Printed by B. Franklin, 1743.

The Critical Review: Or Annals of Literature. By a Society of Gentlemen. Vols. LXVI, LXVII, LXVIII. London: Printed for A. Hamilton, 1788 and 1789.

Curnock, Nehemiah (ed.). The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley. Enlarged from Original Manuscripts, with Notes from Unpublished Diaries, Annotations, Maps, and Illustrations. Standard edition. 8 vols. London: Robert Culley, n.d.

Dwight, Timothy. The Nature and Danger, of Infidel Philosophy, Exhibited in Two Discourses, addressed to the Candidates for the Baccalaureate, in Yale College, September 9th, 1797. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Printed by B. Flower, 1804.

Edwards, Jonathan. Brief observations on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, as lately promulgated in New-Haven. New Haven: Printed by Meigs, Bowen and Dana, 1784.

________. The Salvation of All Men Strictly Examined, and the Endless Punishment of those who die Impenitent, Argued and Defended Against the Objections and Reasonings of the late Rev. Dr. Chauncy of Boston, in his book entitled "The Salvation of All Men." New-Haven: Printed by A. Morse, 1790.

________. "Three Sermons on the Necessity of Atonement, and the Consistency Between That and Free Grace in Forgiveness. Delivered at New Haven, 1785." In Edward A. Park, the Atonement. Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxcy, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks. With an Introductory Essay. Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1859.

Edwards, Morgan. Materials Towards a History of the American Baptists in XII volumes. Volume I, Materials towards a history of the Baptists in Pennsylvania both British and German, distinguished into Firstday Baptists, Keithian Baptists, Seventhday Baptists, Tuncker Baptists, Mennonist Baptists. Philadelphia: Printed by Joseph Crukshank, and Isaac Collins, 1770. Volume II, Materials towards a History of the Baptists in Jersey; distinguished into Firstday Baptists, Seventhday Baptists, Tuncker Baptists, Rogerene Baptists. Philadelphia: Printed by Thomas Dobson, 1792.

________. Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in the Provinces of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. 1772.

________. History of Baptists in Georgia. Ms, Crozer Theological Seminary.

________. History of Baptists in Maryland. Ms, CTS.

________. History of the Baptists in North Carolina. Ms, CTS.

________. History of Baptists in Rhode Island. Ms, CTS.

________. History of Baptists in South Carolina. Ms, CTS.

________. History of Baptists in Virginia. Ms, CTS.

________. Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in Delaware State. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1885.

Evans, Caleb. Christ Crucified; or the Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement briefly illustrated and Defended. In Four Discourses upon that subject. Bristol: Printed by William Pine, 1789.

Evans, David. General Election, or, Salvation for all Men Illustrated and Proved. A Sermon Preached at the Meeting of the United Brethren, in New Britain in Pennsylvania, November, 1785. N.p., 1786.

________. A Letter to the Rev. Doctor Jones; Containing some remarks on the circular letter of the Philadelphia Baptist Association. Boston: White and Cambridge, 1791.

The First Baptist Church of Philadelphia: List of Constituents and other Early Members. By Horatio Gates Jones. Philadelphia: Thomas S. Dando & Co., 1883.

First Universalist Church of Philadelphia Minutes: 1810-1812. Ms, HSP.

First Universalist Church of Philadelphia Minutes: 1812-1813. Ms, HSP.

First Universalist Church of Philadelphia Minutes: 1820-1842. Ms, HSP.

First Universalist Church of Philadelphia Minutes of the Vestry, 1818-1840. Ms, HSP.

Fuller, Andrew. The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems, Examined and Compared, as to their Moral Tendency; in a Series of Letters, Addressed to the Friends of Vital and Practical Religion. The First American; from the second London edition. With corrections and additions. Philadelphia: Printed by Lang and Ustick, 1796.

The Gazeteer; Devoted to Religion, Science, Morality, and News. Edited by Abner Kneeland, Philadelphia: Printed by Atkinson and Alexander, 1824.

Gill, John. Complete Body of Practical and Doctrinal Divinity: Being a System of Evangelical Truths, Deduced from the Sacred Scriptures. Abridged by William Staughton. Philadelphia: Printed for Delaplaine and Hellings, 1810.

Gordon, William. The Doctrine of Final Universal Salvation Examined and Shewn to be Unscriptural: In Answer to a Pamphlet entitled Salvation for All Men Illustrated and Vindicated as a Scripture Doctrine. Boston: Printed by T. and J. Fleet, 1783.

Greene, L. F. (ed.). The Writings of the Late Elder John Leland, including some events of his life, written by himself, with additional sketches. New York: Printed by G. W. Wood, 1845.

Hall, Robert. Modern Infidelity Considered with Respect to its Influence on Society: in a Sermon, Preached at the Baptist Meeting, Cambridge. 3rd edition. Cambridge: Printed by M. Watson, 1800.

Hart, Oliver. A Circular Letter on Christ's Mediatorial Character, addressed by the Philadelphia Baptist Association, to the several churches in Union. Philadelphia, 1782.

________. A Copy of Original Diary of Rev. Oliver Hart of Charlestown, Pastor of the Baptist Church of Charlestown. Ms, South Carolina Historical Society.

________. An Humble Attempt to Repair the Christian Temple. A Sermon, Shewing the Business of Officers and Private Members in the Church of Christ, and How Their Work Should be Performed; With Some Motives to Excite Professors Ardently to Engage in it. Preached in the City of Philadelphia, October 21, 1783, at the opening of the Association, and published at their request. Philadelphia: Printed by Robert Aitken, 1785.

Hartley, David. Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty, and his Expectations. London: J. Johnson, 1791.

Historical Sketch of the Welsh Neck Baptist Church, Society Hill, South Carolina, 1889.

History of the Baptist Church at Kingwood. Trenton, 1833.

Hopkins, Samuel. An Inquiry Concerning the Future State of Those Who Die in their Sins: Wherein the Dictates of Scripture and Reason, upon this important subject, are carefully considered; and Whether Endless Punishment be Consistent with Divine Justice, Wisdom and Goodness: in which also Objections are Stated and Answered. Newport, Rhode-Island: Printed by Solomon Southwick, 1783.

Hunt, Garner A. A Discourse Occasioned by the Death of Jacob Anderson; being a Summary of the doctrines of the Christian Religion; Delivered on the 29th of May, 1799, at the House of the Deceased, Amwell, New-Jersey. Trenton: Printed by Sherman, Mershon and Thomas, 1799.

Huntington, Joseph. Calvinism Improved; or, the Gospel Illustrated as a System of Real Grace, issuing in the Salvation of All Men. New-London: Samuel Green, 1796.

Huntington, William. Advocates for Devils Refuted, and their Hope of the Damned Demolished: Or, An Everlasting Task for Winchester and all his Confederates. Philadelphia: Printed for Marsh and Miller, New-York, by Lang and Ustick, 1796.

Isaac, Daniel. The Doctrine of Universal Restoration Examined and Refuted; and Objections to that of Endless Punishment Considered and Answered: Being a Reply to the Most Important Particulars Contained in the Writings of Messrs. Winchester, Vidler, Wright, and Weaver. New York: Published by J. Soule and T. Mason, for the Methodist Episcopal Church in United States, 1819.

Jones, David. Register and Diary. Ms, HSP.

Jones, Samuel. A Letter Addressed to the Danbury Association. Written at the Request of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, November 10, 1793. Philadelphia: T. S. Manning, 1826.

________. Letter to the Danbury Association of Baptist Churches, March 30, 1794. Ms, HSP.

________. A Treatise of Church Discipline and a Directory. Done by Appointment of the Philadelphia Baptist Association. Philadelphia: S. C. Ustick, 1798.

Kendrick, Ariel. A Brief Reply to a Pamphlet Lately Published by S. Delanoe, (Under the fictitious name of Candor) in favour of Universalism. Entitled Miscellaneous Thoughts on the Doctrine of Limited Election and Reprobation. Hanover, New Hampshire: Printed by Benjamin True, 1798.

Knapp, Jacob. Autobiography of Elder Jacob Knapp. With an Introductory Essay by R. Jeffery. New York: Sheldon and Company, 1868.

Kneeland, Abner. Ancient Universalism, as Taught by Christ and his Apostles in Reply to a Pamphlet, entitled "Remarks on the Distinguishing Doctrine of Modern Universalism, which teaches that there is no Hell and no Punishment for the Wicked after Death. By Adam Empie, A.M., Rector of St. James's Church, Wilmington, North Carolina." New-York: Printed at the Office of the Gospel Herald, 1825.

________. The Columbian Miscellany; containing a variety of important, instructive, and entertaining matter, chiefly selected out of the Philadelphian Magazines, published in London, in the years 1788 and 1789, calculated to promote true religion and virtue. Keene, Newhampshire: Printed by John Prentiss, 1804.

________. A Review of the Trial, Conviction, and Final Imprisonment in the Common Jail of the County of Suffolk, of Abner Kneeland, for the Alleged Crime of Blasphemy. Boston, George A. Chapman, 1838.

________. A Series of Lectures on the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence; Delivered in the Universalist Church, in Lombard Street, Philadelphia, in the Autumn of 1818, and Published at the Request of the Brethren attending in said Church. Philadelphia: Printed for the Author by Clark and Roser, 1818.

Letter from The Baptist Association of Charleston, met at Black Swamp, the 12th, and Continued to the 16th of December, 1789, to the Philadelphia Baptist Association. Ms, SCHS.

Marshall, Christopher. Diary. Ms, HSP.

________. Letter Book. Ms, HSP.

Marsom, John. The Universal Restoration of Mankind, Examined and proved to be a Doctrine Inconsistent with itself, Contrary to the Scriptures, and subversive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In answer to Dr. Chauncy of New England and Mr. Winchester's dialogues. 2 vols. London: Printed for and Sold by the author, 1794.

Maxcy, Jonathan. A Discourse Designed to Explain the Doctrine of Atonement. In Two Parts. Delivered in the Chapel of Rhode-Island College, on the 11th and 25th of November, 1796. Providence: Printed by Carter and Wilkinson, 1796.

________. The Literary Remains of the Rev. Jonathan Maxcy, D.D. With a Memoir of His Life, by Romeo Elton, D.D. New York: Published by A. V. Blake, 1844.

Mayhew, Jonathan. Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfection of the Divine Goodness. Delivered December 9, 1762. Being the Annual Thanksgiving of the Province. On Psalm 145:9. Published with some enlargements. Boston: Printed and Sold by D. and J. Kneeland, 1763.

Messer, Asa. Discourse in the Chapel of Rhode-Island College to the Senior Class on the Sunday preceding their Commencement. Providence: John Carter, Jr., 1799.

McClothlin, W. J. Baptist Confessions of Faith. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1911.

Minutes of the Baptist Church, Middletown, New Jersey.

Minutes of the Baptist Church in Upper Freehold, New Jersey.

The Minutes of the Danbury Association, 1790-1813.

Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Hightstown, New Jersey.

Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Philadelphia. Vol. 3, 1779 to January, 1786. Vol. 4, February 6, 1786 to December 5, 1791.

Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Salem, New Jersey.

Minutes of the New York Baptist Association, 1791-1815.

Minutes of the Ontario Baptist Association, holden at Pittsford, September 25th and 26th, 1816. Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letter. Canandaigua, New York: Printed at the Messenger office, 1816.

Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, from 1707 to 1807; being the first One Hundred Years of its Existence. Edited by A. D. Gillette, A.M., pastor of the Eleventh Baptist Church, Philadelphia. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 118 Arch Street, 1851.

Minutes of the Warren Association, 1767-1800.

Minutes of the West New Jersey Baptist Association. 1869.

Murray, John. Journal. Ms, HSP.

________. Letters, and Sketches of Sermons. 3 vols. Boston: Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812-13.

________. Records of the Life of the Rev. John Murray; Late Minister of the Reconciliation, and Senior Pastor of the Universalists, congregated in Boston. To which is added, a brief continuation, to the closing scene, by a friend. Boston: Published by Munroe and Francis, 1816.

________. Universalism Vindicated: Being the Substance of Some Observations on the Revelation of the Unbounded Love of God, made to the Patriarch, in the Field of Padanaram. Genesis XXVII, 14. And, confirmed by the Joint Suffrages of the Prophets and Apostles. Delivered some time since to the people who statedly worship the only wise God our Saviour, in the meeting house in Middle Street, corner of Bennet Street. Charlestown: Printed by J. Lamson, 1798.

Newton, Thomas. Dissertations on the Prophecies, which have remarkably been fulfilled, and at this time are fulfilling in the world. 2 vols. 8th edition. Elizabeth-Town: Printed by Shepard Kollock, for Robert Hodge, 1787.

Palmer, Elihu. Letter to Rev. Jedidiah Morse, September 25, 1791. Ms, HSP.

Park, Edwards Amasa. The Atonement. Discourses and Treatises by Edwards, Smalley, Maxcy, Emmons, Griffin, Burge, and Weeks. With an Introductory Essay by Edwards A. Park, Abbot Professor of Christian Theology, Andover, Massachusetts. Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1859.

Pennsylvania Gazette, January 5, 1779 to December 26, 1804.

Petitpierre, Ferdinand Oliver. Thoughts on Divine Government, relative to the Government of Moral Agents, Particularly displayed in Future Rewards and Punishments. Translated from the French. Hartford: Elisha Babcock, 1794.

The Philadelphia Universalist Magazine and Christian Messenger, devoted to Doctrine, Religion and Morality. Edited by Abner Kneeland. Vols. I, II. Philadelphia: Published by the Editor for the Proprietors, 1821-1823.

The Philadelphian Magazine, April, 1788; January to November, 1789.

Pittsgrove Baptist Church. Letter to the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1790. NJHS, Ms file no. 259.

Poor Barny: To which is added, A Sermon Respecting Universal Salvation, by a man of colour. Philadelphia: Published by the Religious Tract Society of Philadelphia, 1820.

Priestley, Joseph. The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated; Being an Appendix to the Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit. 1777. In John T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works. Vol. III.

________. Discourses on the Evidence of Revealed Religion. London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1794.

________. Discourses Relating to the Evidences of Revealed Religion, Delivered in the Church of the Universalists, at Philadelphia, 1796. And published at the request of many of the hearers. Philadelphia: Printed by John Thompson, 1796.

________. The History of the Corruptions of Christianity, 1782. In John T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works. Vol. V.

________. Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion. In John T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works. Vol. II.

________. Memoirs of Dr. J. Priestley to the Year 1795. Written by Himself, with a Continuation by his Son, J. Priestley. In Memoirs and Correspondence 1733-1787 and Life and Correspondence 1787-1804. In John T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works. Vol. I.

________. Notes on the New Testament, 1804. In John T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works. Vol. XIV.

________. Unitarianism Explained and Defended in a Discourse Delivered in the Church of the Universalists, at Philadelphia, 1796. In John T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works. Vol. XVI.

Proceedings at the Universalist Centennial held in Gloucester, Massachusetts. September 20-22, 1870. Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1870.

Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society, 3rd Series, Vol. II, No. 2, 1897.

Ramsay, Andrew Michael. The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion. Unfolded in a Geometrical Order by the Chevalier Ramsay, author of the Travels of Cyrus. 2 vols. Glasgow: Printed and Sold by Robert Foulis, 1748-1749.

Register of the Universalist Church, Commencing 1801. A Brief Historical of the Church in latter pages, compiled and written in March 1912 by Henry E. Busch. Ms, HSP.

Relly, James. Salvation Compleated: and Secured in Christ, as the Covenant of the People. Considered in a Discourse on that subject. London: Printed by J. Davis, 1779.

________. A Short Specimen of Apostolick Preaching, Humbly offered to the Serious Consideration of People of all Denominations. Burlington: Printed by Isaac Collins, 1773.

________. Union: or A Treatise on the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and His Church. Philadelphia: Gihon, Fairchild & Co., 1843.

Rogers, William. A Circular Letter on the All Important Doctrine of Justification, Addressed by the Philadelphia Baptist Association in North America, to the several churches in Union. Philadelphia, 1785.

Rush, Benjamin. Essays, Literary, Moral, and Philosophical. Philadelphia: Printed by Thomas and Samuel F. Bradford, 1798.

________. A Memorial Containing Travels through Life or Sundry Incidents in the Life of Dr. Benjamin Rush. Also Extracts from his Commonplace Book as well as a short History of the Rush Family in Pennsylvania. Philadelphia: Louis Alexander Biddle, 1905.

Second Universalist Church of Philadelphia Minutes 1820-1854. Ms, HSP.

Shepard, Samuel. The Principle of Universal Salvation Examined and Tried by the law and testimony, and found to be a direct contradiction to the doctrine of Christ and his inspired witnesses. In an epistle to a friend. Exeter: Printed by Henry Ravlet, 1798.

Siegvolck, Paul. The Everlasting Gospel, Commanded to be Preached by Jesus Christ, Judge of the Living and Dead, Unto All Creatures, Mark 16:15. Concerning the Eternal Redemption Found Out by Him, Whereby *Devil*, *Sin*, *Hell* and *Death*, shall at last be abolished, and the Whole Creation Restored to its Primitive Purity; being Testimony against the Present Anti-christian World. Translated into English by John Sechla. Germantown: Printed by Christopher Sower, 1753.

Smalley, John. Eternal Salvation on no account a Matter of Just Debt; or, Full Redemption, not Interfering with Free Grace. A Sermon, delivered at Wallingford, by Particular Agreement, with Special Reference to the Murryan Controversy. Hartford: Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, 1785.

________. The Law in all Respects Satisfied by our Saviour, in Regard to those only who Belong to Him; or, None but Believers Saved, through the All-Sufficient Satisfaction of Christ. A Second Sermon, Preached at Wallingford, with a view to the Universalists. Hartford: Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, 1786.

________. Sermons, on a Number of Connected Subjects; in which an Attempt is made to Explain the Leading Principles of Revealed Religion; to Show their Consistency, Reasonableness and Importance; and to Guard them Against Dangerous Misconstructions and False Inferences, and Against the Specious Objections of Unbelievers. Hartford: Printed for Oliver D. Cooke, 1803.

Smith, Elias. The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels, and Sufferings of Elias Smith. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Printed by Beck and Foster, 1816.

Souvenir of the Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of South Place Ethical Society. London: February 14, 1943.

Spaulding, Josiah. Universalism Confounds and Destroys Itself, or, Letters to a Friend; in Four Parts. Northampton, Massachusetts: Printed by Andrew Wright, 1805.

Stancliff, John. Letter to Samuel Jones, August 4, 1790. Ms, HSP.

Staughton, William. A Circular Letter on the Doctrines of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience, Addressed by the Philadelphia Association to the Several Churches in Union. Philadelphia, 1796.

Strong, Nathan. The Doctrine of Eternal Misery Reconcilable with the Infinite Benevolence of God, and a Truth Plainly Asserted in the Christian Scriptures. Hartford, Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, 1796.

Stonhouse, James. Universal Restitution, A Scripture Doctrine. This Proved in Several Letters Wrote on the Nature and Extent of Christ's Kingdom. Wherein the Scripture Passages Falsely Alledged in Proof of the Eternity of Hell Torments are Truly Translated and Explained. London: Sold by R. Dodsley and T. Cadell, 1761.

A Testimony of Respect To the Memory of Elhanan Winchester, by Mr. Jones of Philadelphia. Glasgow: Printed by W. Kaye, 1824.

Thomas, David. The Novelty of Novelties Examined: Or, The New System of Religion Compared with Ancient Scriptures, and Found to be Contrary to them all. Being Some Friendly Remarks on Mr. Winchester's Late Sermon, Entitled The Seed of the Woman Bruising the Serpent's Head. Philadelphia: Printed for the author, 1782.

Thoughts on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation. As Preached, Maintained, and Propagated by Mr. John Murray, And Others of the People Called Universal Baptists. By a Youth of this City. Philadelphia: Printed for the author by Prichard and Hall, 1790.

Townsend, Shippie. Gospel News, divided into Eleven Sections. Peace and Joy: Being a Brief Attempt to Consider the Evidences of the Truth of the Gospel, in which we have the witness of Peace with God, through Jesus Christ, Drawn from the Old and New-Testaments, together with our Obligations to Keep the Foundation of our Peace, thus evidenced always in Remembrance; with Several Other Pieces Connected with and Built upon this Foundation, Part of which was not before Published. Boston: Alexander Young and Thomas Minns, 1794.

Tyler, John. Universal Damnation, and Salvation, Clearly Proved by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Specially Recommended to the Perusal of Those Who Believe in the Salvation of All Mankind. Boston: Printed by B. Edes, 1798.

Universalist Church of the Restoration. 6 vols. Minute Books, 1820-1854. Ms, HSP.

Vidler, William. The Designs of the Death of Christ, a Sermon delivered in October 1794, at Parliament-Court Chapel, Artillery-Street. London: Printed for the Author, 1795.

________. God's Love to his Creatures Asserted and Vindicated; Being a Reply to the "Strictures upon an address to candid and serious men." London: Printed by W. Burton, Fetter Lane, 1799.

________. A Testimony of Respect to the Memory of Elhanan Winchester, Preacher of The Universal Restoration, Who Died at Hartford in America, April 18, 1797. Aged 46 Years. Being the Substance of a Discourse Delivered at Parliament-Court Chapel, June 18, 1797. London: Printed by T. Gillet, 1797.

Welsh Neck Baptist Church, Society Hill, South Carolina. Church Book, 1737-1952. Ms, SCHS.

West, Stephen. The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, Proposed to a Careful Examination. New-Haven: Printed by Meigs, Bowen and Dana, 1785.

White, Jeremiah. Restoration of All Things: or, A Vindication of the Goodness and Grace of God, to be Manifested at Last, in the Recovery of his Whole Creation out of their Fall. First American edition. Philadelphia: Gihon, Fairchild & Co., 1844.

The Winchester Centennial, 1803-1903.

The Winchester Confession. In Register of Universalist Church, Commencing 1801. Ms, HSP.

Winchester, Elhanan. An Attempt to Collect the Scriptural Passages in Favour of the Universal Restoration, as Connected with the Doctrine of Rewards and Punishments. All Tending to Prove, the Universal Empire of Christ, the Total Destruction of Evil, and the Final Re-establishment of Lapsed Intelligences. Providence: Printed by Bennett Wheeler, 1786.

________. A Century Sermon on the Glorious Revolution, Preached in London, Nov. 16, 1788. London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1788.

________. Children Exhorted to Remember their Creators. The Substance of a Discourse Preached at the Request of a Youth, on Lord's Day morning, December 15, 1793, in the Chapel, Parliament Court, Artillery Street, Bishopsgate Street. London: Printed by T. Gillet, 1793.

________. Comfort for Mourning Christians. A Sermon Preached at Fleet, in Lincolnshire, October 27th, 1789; at the Funeral of Mr. Matthew Hursthouse, who Departed this Life, October 25th, 1789. London: Printed by R. Hawes, n.d.

________. A Course of Lectures, on the Prophecies that Remain to be Fulfilled. Delivered in the Borough of Southwark, in the year 1788. Printed for the Philadelphian Society: and Included in a Periodical Work, begun in February 1788, called the Philadelphian Magazine.

________. The Divinity of Christ, Proved from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. In Several Letters to a Friend. Philadelphia: Benjamin Towne, 1784.

________. The Face of Moses Unveiled, by the Gospel; or Evangelical Truths, Discovered in the Law. In Four Discourses, being an Attempt to show the Design of the Observation of Days, Sermons, Times and Years, as Commanded by God to the Israelites. As also, the Land of Canaan Considered as a Figure of the Rest that Remaineth to the People of God. Philadelphia: Printed and sold by Enoch Story, 1787.

________. A Funeral Sermon for the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, who Departed this Life March 2, 1791, in the Eighty-Eighth Year of his Age. Delivered March 10th, the day after his interment. London: Printed for the author, 1791.

________. Good News, or the Final Restoration of All Men: Abridged from Lectures by the Celebrated Elhanan Winchester, Delivered in 1789. Adelaide: Printed by David Call, King William Street, 1866.

________. The Gospel of Christ No Cause of Shame: Demonstrated in Two Discourses on the Subject. Philadelphia: Printed by B. Towne, 1783.

________. The Gospel Preached by the Apostles, and Especially St. Paul: Being A Discourse Chiefly Drawn from his Writings, Proving that this Great Apostle Held, and Taught, both Particular and General Redemption and Salvation. Delivered at the Chapel in Glass-House-Yard, Aug. 10, 1788. 2nd ed. London: Printed for a Society of Gentlemen, 1788.

________. The Holy Conversation and High Expectations of Christians. A Discourse, Delivered in London, April 29, 1789. To which are added, a few Remarks on the Rev. Dan Taylor's Discourse, entitled, "The Eternity of future Punishment, asserted and improved." In a Letter to a Friend. London: Printed and Sold by R. Hawes, n.d.

________. A Letter to Rev. C. E. DeCoetlogon, A.M. Editor of President Edward's Lately-Revived Sermon, on the Eternity of Hell-Torments. London: Printed for the Author, 1789.

________. Letter to George Washington, Dec. 9, 1783. Philadelphia. Ms, HSP.

________. Letter to Joseph Wilson, Feb. 13, 1793. Ms, HSP.

________. Lectures on the Prophecies of the Final Restoration of All Men, Collected from the Sacred Scriptures, with some brief Observations upon them. Ballston Spa: James Comstock, 1811.

________. An Oration on the Discovery of America, Delivered in London, October 12, 1792, being Three Hundred Years from the Day on which Columbus Landed in the New World. The Second Edition, with an Appendix, Containing a Description of the City of Washington, in the District of Columbia; Illustrated with an Accurate Engraving. Includes a Short Sketch of Life and Character of George Washington. London: Printed for the author, by Keeble and Acutts, 1792.

________. The Outcasts Comforted. A Sermon Delivered at the University of Philadelphia, January 4, 1782, to the Members of the Baptist Church, who have been Rejected by their Brethren, for Holding the Doctrine of The Final Restoration of all things. Philadelphia: Printed by Benjamin Towne, in the year 1782.

________. A Plain Political Catechism Intended for the Use of Schools, in the United States of America: wherein the Great Principles of Liberty, and of the Federal Government, are laid down and Explained, by way of Question and Answer. Made Level to the Lowest Capacities. Greenfield, Massachusetts: From the Press of T. Dickman, 1796.

________. The Preaching of the Atonement, Foolishness to Such as Perish, but Powerful to those that are Saved. A Sermon Delivered at Glass-House-Yard, Goswell-Street, London; November 20, 1791. London: Printed for the author by a company of gentlemen, 1792.

________. The Process and Empire of Christ; From his Birth to the End of the Mediatorial Kingdom; a Poem, in Twelve Books. Brattleboro: Printed by William Fessenden, 1805.

________. The Reigning Abominations, Especially the Slave Trade, Considered as Causes of Lamentation; Being the Substance of a Discourse delivered in Fairfax County, Virginia, December 30, 1774. London: Printed and Sold by H. Trapp, 1788.

________. The Restitution of All Things Defended: Being an Attempt to Answer the Reverend Dan Taylor's Assertions and Re-assertions in Favour of Endless Misery, in Five Letters to Himself. London: Printed for the author, 1790.

________. The Seed of the Woman Bruising the Serpent's Head. A Discourse Delivered at the Baptist Meeting House, in Philadelphia, Sunday, April 22, 1781. Philadelphia: Published by request, 1781.

________. Ten Letters Addressed to Mr. Paine, in Answer to his Pamphlet, Entitled The Age of Reason. Containing some Clear and Satisfying Evidences of the Truth of Divine Revelation; and Especially of the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus. Boston: Printed and sold by John W. Folsom, 1794.

________. Thirteen Hymns, Suited to the Present Times; Containing the Past, Present, and Future State of America; with Advice to Soldiers and Christians. Dedicated to the Inhabitants of the United Colonies. 2d ed. Baltimore: Printed by M. K. Goddard, 1776.

________. The Three Woe-Trumpets, of which the First and Second are Already Past, and the Third is now Begun: Under which The Seven Vials of the Wrath of God are to be Poured Out upon the World. Being the Substance of Two Discourses, from Rev. XI. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. Delivered in Parliament, on the 3d and 24th of February, 1793. Johnstown: Printed by Asa Child, 1811.

________. A True and Most Remarkable Account of Some Passages in the Life of Mr. George DeBenneville, of an Ancient and Noble Protestant Family in Normandy. Translated from the French of his own manuscript, by Elhanan Winchester. Never before Published in English. To which is Prefixed a Preface by the Translator. London: Sold by the editor, 1791.

________. The Universal Restoration, Exhibited in Four Dialogues Between a Minister and His Friend; Comprehending the Substance of Several Real Conversations which the Author had with Various Persons, both in America and Europe, on that Interesting Subject, Chiefly Designed fully to State, and Fairly to Answer the Most Common Objections that are Brought Against it from the Scriptures. A new edition. To this Edition is prefixed, a Brief Account of the Means and Manner of the Author's Embracing these Sentiments, Intermixed with some Sketches of his Life during Four Years. Philadelphia: Printed by T. Dobson, 1792.

________. The Universal Restoration, Exhibited in Four Dialogues.... London: Printed by W. Burton, North Street, City Road, 1799.

________. The Universalist's Hymn Book; Containing I Original Hymns Composed upon Various Subjects of Divinity, and Arranged under Proper Heads. II An Appendix Consisting of a Small but Choice Collection of Hymns, from Several Authors, Particularly Designed for the use of Those Congregations who Believe in the Millenium, and the Universal Restoration. London: Printed for the author by T. Gillet, 1794.

________. Wisdom Learnt from Man's Mortality; or the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life Considered and Improved. A Discourse Occasioned by the Death of Israel Johnson, who Departed this Life, November 27, 1786, in the 17th Year of his age. Delivered the evening after his Interment, Nov. 28. Philadelphia: Printed by Charles Cist, 1787.

________. Wisdom Taught by Man's Mortality; or, the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life, the Certainty and Suddenness of Death, Considered. A Discourse Adapted to the Awful Visitation of the City of Philadelphia, by the Yellow Fever, in the Year 1793, by which more than Four Thousand Persons were Swept off in about Three Months. In this Discourse, all the Scripture Metaphors, Respecting the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life, are Mentioned, and Commented upon; and a Hymn Added at the close, in which they are all Recited. Philadelphia: Printed by R. Folwell, 1795.

________. The Works and Words of Jesus: or, What He Did, and Taught, During His Abode on Earth. London: Printed for the Philadelphian Society, 1788.

[________]. An Address to the Youth of Both Sexes in Philadelphia. N.p., n.d.

________. The Mystic's Plea for Universal Redemption, as Held Forth, and Preached by Mr. Elhanan Winchester; being an Occasional Answer to his Persecutors, in a Number of Letters to the Rev. William Rogers, etc. by Mordecai Servetus (pseud.). Philadelphia: Printed in the year 1781.

________. Remarks upon a Pamphlet Intitled "An address from the Baptist church in Philadelphia, to their sister churches of the same denomination, throughout the confederated states of North America." In which some Mistakes are Rectified, and the Matters of Fact Set in a True Light. Philadelphia: Printed by Ben. Towne, 1781.

________. Short Sketch of the Life and Character of General Washington. N.p., n.d.

Worcester, Noah. Impartial Inquiries Respecting the Progress of the Baptist Denomination. Worcester, Massachusetts: Leonard Worcester, 1794.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Acrelius, Israel. A History of New Sweden; or, The Settlements on the River Delaware. Translated from the Swedish, with an Introduction and Notes, by William M. Reynolds. Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1874.

Adams, Brooks. The Emancipation of Massachusetts; The Dream and the Reality. Rev. and enl. ed. Boston: 1919.

Allen, Joseph Henry, and Eddy, Richard. A History of the Unitarians and Universalists in the United States. New York: Christian Literature Company, 1894.

Allison, Henry E. Lessing and the Enlightenment. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966.

Allison, William H. "Abner Kneeland," Dictionary of American Biography. Edited by Dumas Malone. Vol. X, 1932.

Asplund, John. The Universal Register of the Baptist Denomination in North America, for the Years 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, and part of 1794. Boston: Printed by John W. Folsom, 1794.

Backus, Isaac. A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians Called Baptists. 2d ed. 2 vols. Newton, Massachusetts: Published by the Backus Historical Society, 1871.

Baird, Robert. Religion In America; or, an Account of the Origin, Progress, Relation to the State, and Present Condition of the Evangelical Churches in the United States. With Notices of the Unevangelical Denominations. New-York: Published by Harper & Brothers, 1845.

Ballou, Hosea, 2d. Ancient History of Universalism: from the time of the apostles, to its condemnation in the fifth general council, A.D. 553. With an appendix, tracing the doctrine down to the Era of the Reformation. Boston: Marsh and Capen, 1829.

________. "Dogmatic and Religious History of Universalism in America," in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, Vol. V. Boston: A. Tompkins, 1848.

________. "Rev. Hosea Ballou; His Parentage and Early Life." In The Universalist Quarterly and General Review. Vol. XI. Boston: Published by A. Tompkins, 1854.

Ballou, Maturin M. Biography of Rev. Hosea Ballou. By his Youngest Son. Boston: Published by Abel Tompkins, 1852.

Becker, Carl. The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932.

Bell, Albert D. The Life and Times of Dr. George DeBenneville 1703-1793. Boston: Department of Publications of the Universalist Church of America, 1953.

Benedict, David. A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America, and Other Parts of the World. 2 vols. Boston: Printed by Lincoln and Edmands, 1813.

Bernhard, Harold Ernest. "Charles Chauncy: Colonial Liberal 1705-1787." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1945.

Boyd, Jesse Laney. A History of Baptists in America Prior to 1845. New York: American Press, 1957.

Bronson, Walter Cochrane. The History of Brown University 1764-1914. Providence: Published by the University, 1915.

Brumbaugh, Martin Grove. A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America. Mount Morris, Ill.: Brethren Publishing House, 1899.

Butler, Thomas. Chapters from the Life of John Murray, Father of the Universalist Church in America, Feb. 2, 1899. Ms, HSP.

Butterfield, L. H. Elder John Leland, Jeffersonian Itinerant. Reprinted from the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society for October 1952. Worcester, Massachusetts: Published by the Society, 1953.

Cassara, Ernest. Hosea Ballou. The Challenge to Orthodoxy. Boston: The Universalist Historical Society, 1961.

________. Hosea Ballou and the Rise of American Religious Liberalism. Boston, Massachusetts: Universalist Historical Society, 1958.

Cassirer, Ernst. The Philosophy of the Enlightenment. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1951.

Cathcart, William (ed.). The Baptist Encyclopedia. A Dictionary of the Doctrines, Ordinances, Usages, Confessions of Faith, Sufferings, Labors, and Successes, and of the General History of the Baptist Denomination in All Lands. With numerous Biographical Sketches of Distinguished American and Foreign Baptists, and a Supplement. Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881.

Chapin, Lloyd W., Jr. "The Theology of Joseph Priestley: A Study in Eighteenth Century Apologetics." Unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, 1967.

Clemmer, Robert R. "Enlightenment Church History in the United States, 1800-1850." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1961.

Cobb, Sanford H. The Rise of Religious Liberty in America. New York: Macmillan Company, 1902.

Cooke, George Willis. Unitarianism in America, A History of its Origin and Development. Boston: American Unitarian Association, 1902.

Conway, Moncure D. Centenary History of the South Place Society. Farleigh Press Ltd. (T.U.), Beechwood Works, Beechwood Rise, Watford Herts, 1894.

Cragg, Gerald R. The Church and the Age of Reason, 1648-1789. New York: Atheneum, 1961.

________. Reason and Authority in the Eighteenth Century. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1964.

Demarest, G. L. "The Murray Centenary," in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review. New Series. Vol. VII. Boston: Published by the Universalist Publishing House, 1870.

Dexter, Franklin Bowditch (ed.). The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901.

Eddy, Richard. Sketch of Abner Kneeland in a Letter dated Melrose, Massachusetts, March 18, 1885. Ms, HSP.

________. Universalism in America. A History. Vol. I, 1636-1800. Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1884.

________. "Universalist Conventions and Creeds," in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review. Vols. XII, XIII, XIV, XV, 1875-1878. Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1875-1878.

Foster, Frank H. "The Eschatology of the New England Divines," in Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. 45, No. 180 (Oct. 1888); Vol. 46, No. 181 (Jan. 1889).

________. A Genetic History of the New England Theology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1907.

Furman, Wood (comp.). A History of the Charleston Association of Baptist Churches in the State of South Carolina, with an Appendix Containing the Principal Circular Letters to the Churches. Charleston, South Carolina: From the Press of J. Hoff, No. 6, Broad Street, 1811.

Geffen, Elizabeth May. Philadelphia Unitarianism 1796-1861. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961.

Gillett, E. H. History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Rev. ed. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Education, 1864.

Goen, C. C. Revivalism and Separatism in New England, 1740-1780: Strict Congregationalists and Separate Baptists in the Great Awakening. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962.

Guild, Reuben Aldridge. Early History of Brown University, Including the Life, Times and Correspondence of President Manning, 1756-1791. Providence: Printed by Snow and Farnham, 1897.

Haskell, Ellery Bickford. "The Degree of Freedom with Respect to Theological Doctrine Permitted to Members of Local Baptist Churches in American History to 1815." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1945.

Hepburn, Joseph Samuel. The Pennsylvania Associations of Joseph Priestley. Reprinted from the Journal of the Franklin Institute, Vol. 244, Nos. 1 and 2, July and August, 1947.

Hovey, Alvah. A Memoir of the Life and Times of Rev. Isaac Backus, A.M. Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1859.

Humphrey, Edward Frank. Nationalism and Religion in America, 1774-1789. Boston: Chipman Law Publishing Company, 1924.

Keen, William Williams. The Bi-Centennial Celebration of the Founding of the First Baptist Church of the City of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1899.

________. The Early Years of Brown University. 1764-1770. N.p., n.d.

Koch, Gustave Adolf. "Elihu Palmer," Dictionary of American Biography. Edited by Dumas Malone. Vol. XIV, 1932.

________. Republican Religion: The American Religion and the Cult of Reason. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1933.

Lee, Sidney (ed.). Dictionary of National Biography. Vol. LIV. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1898.

Maring, Norman H. Baptists in New Jersey: A Study in Transition. Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1964.

Marty, Martin E. "The Uses of Infidelity: Changing Images of Freethought Opposition to American Churches." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1956.

McCabe, Joseph (comp.). A Biographical Dictionary of Modern Rationalists. London: Watts & Co., 1920.

McGehee, Charles White. "Elhanan Winchester: A Decision for Universal Restoration." In The Annual Journal of the Universalist Historical Society, Vol. I. Boston: The Universalist Historical Society, 1959.

McLoughlin, William G. Isaac Backus and the American Pietistic Tradition. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967.

Morais, Herbert M. "Life and Work of Elder John Leland." Unpublished Master's thesis, Columbia University, 1928.

________. Deism in Eighteenth Century America. New York: Russell & Russell, 1960.

Morris, Carol. "A Comparison of Ethan Allen's Reason the Only Oracle of Man and Hosea Ballou's A Treatise on Atonement," in the Annual Journal of the Universalist Historical Society, Vol. II, 1960-1961. Boston, Massachusetts: The Universalist Historical Society, 1961.

Newman, Albert Henry. A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States. New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1894.

Nichols, James Hastings. History of Christianity, 1650-1950, Secularization of the West. New York: Ronald Press, 1955.

Owens, Loulie Latimer. Oliver Hart, 1723-1795: A Biography. Greenville, South Carolina: South Carolina Baptist Historical Society, 1966.

Parrington, Vernon L. The Colonial Mind, 1620-1800 and The Romantic Revolution in America, 1800-1860. (Vols. I and II in Main Currents in American Thought, an Interpretation of American Literature from the Beginnings to 1920). New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927.

Posey, Walter Brownlow. The Baptist Church in the Lower Mississippi Valley, 1776-1845. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957.

Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society, 3d series, January, 1897, Volume II, No. 2.

Rippon, John. The Baptist Annual Register, for 1790, 1791, 1792, and Part of 1793; 1794, 1795, 1796-1797; 1798, 1799, 1800, and Part of 1801; 1801 and 1802. Including Sketches of the State of Religion Among Different Denominations of Good Men at Home and Abroad. London: Sold by Messrs. Dilly, Button, and Thomas.

Ryland, Garnett. The Baptists of Virginia, 1699-1926. Richmond: Virginia Baptist Board of Missions and Education, 1955.

Sachse, Julius Friedrich. The German Pietists of Pennsylvania, 1694-1708. Philadelphia: Printed for the author, 1895.

________. The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania, 1708-1800. A Critical and Legendary History of the Ephrata Cloister and the Dunkers. 2 vols. Printed for the author, 1899, 1900.

Sanborn, F. B., and Harris, William T. A Bronson Alcott: His Life and Philosophy. 2 vols. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1893.

Scharf, John Thomas, and Westcott, Thompson. History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884. Philadelphia: L. H. Everts and Company, 1884.

Scott, Clinton Lee. "Universalism in New Hampshire," in The Annual Journal of the Universalist Historical Society, Vol. I, 1959. Boston, Massachusetts: The Universalist Historical Society, 1959.

Sample, Robert B. A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia. First published in 1810. Revised and extended by G. W. Beale Richmond: Pitt and Dickinson, 1894.

Smith, Edgar F. Priestley in America: 1794-1804. Philadelphia: P. Blakiston's Son and Co., 1920.

Sonne, Niels. Liberal Kentucky 1780-1828. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939.

Spencer, David. The Early Baptists of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: William Sykelmoore, 1877.

Spencer, John Harrison. History of Kentucky Baptists. 2 vols. Cincinnati: J. R. Baumes, 1885.

Sprague, William B. Annals of the American Pulpit; or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished American Clergymen of Various Denominations, from the early settlement of the country to the close of the year eighteen hundred and fifty-five. 9 vols. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1857-1869.

Starr, Harris Ellwood, "Elhanan Winchester," Dictionary of American Biography. Edited by Dumas Malone. Vol. XX, 1932.

Stone, Edwin Martin. Biography of Rev. Elhanan Winchester. Boston: H. B. Brewster, 1836.

Sweet, William Warren. Religion on the American Frontier: The Baptists, 1783-1830. A Collection of Source Materials. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931.

Taylor, Adam. The History of the English General Baptists. Part Second: The New Connection of General Baptists. London: Printed for the Author, by T. Bore, Raven Row, Mile-end Turnpike, 1818.

Taylor, James B. Virginia Baptist Ministers. 1st Series. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1859.

Thomas, Abel C. A Century of Universalism in Philadelphia and New York, with Sketches of Its History in Reading, Hightstown, Brooklyn, and Elsewhere. Philadelphia: Published for whom it may concern, 1872.

Torbet, Robert George. A History of the Baptists. Philadelphia: The Judson Press, c1950, revised ed. 1955.

________. A Social History of the Philadelphia Baptist Association: 1707-1940. Philadelphia: Westbrook Publishing Company, 1944.

Townsend, Leah. South Carolina Baptists 1670-1815. Florence, South Carolina: The Florence Printing Company, 1935.

Vidler, William. A Sketch of The Life of Elhanan Winchester, Preacher of the Universal Restoration, with a Review of His Writings. London: Printed by T. Gillett for the author, 1797.

Westcott, Thompson. Life of John Fitch, the Inventor of the Steamboat. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1878.

Whitley, William Thomas. The Baptists of London 1612-1928. London: The Kingsgate Press, n.d.

________. A History of British Baptists. London: Charles Griffin & Company, Limited, 1923.

Whittemore, Thomas. Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou; with Accounts of his Writings, and Biographical Sketches of his Seniors and Contemporaries in the Universalist Ministry. Boston: James M. Usher, 1854.

________. The Life of Rev. John Murray, Preacher of Universal Salvation. With Notes and an Appendix. Boston: Published at the Trumpet Office, 1833.

________. Modern History of Universalism from the Reformation to the Present Time. Boston: Published by the author, 1830.

Wilbur, Earl Norse. A History of Unitarianism in Transylvania, England, and America. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952.

Wright, Conrad. The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955.

PREFACE

In the course of reading in the latter half of the eighteenth century, I came across six or seven significant but forgotten figures who played prominent roles in various religious movements. Among those persons who constituted the forgotten men was Elhanan Winchester. This dissertation is thus part of a larger area of interest and investigation which I have marked out for myself.

7

I am deeply indebted to the many persons who assisted me in this dissertation. Professor Don Yoder inspired and supervised the dissertation. Professors Claude Welch and Robert F. Evans of the University of Pennsylvania carefully read the manuscript and offered helpful suggestions which resulted in some cases in the restructuring of parts of the work. I am grateful to fellow members of the Board of Managers of the American Baptist Historical Society who allowed me to read parts of the dissertation at their annual meeting and make constructive observations. Professor Norman H. Maring of the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary shared with me some of the fruits of his extensive research into the Baptists of New Jersey and directed me to appropriate collections of materials. Appreciation is also expressed to the staffs of the libraries of the American Baptist Historical Society, Tufts University, Union Theological Seminary, Crozer Theological Seminary, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, University of Pennsylvania, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Library

Company of Philadelphia, and the Southern Baptist Historical Commission for their assistance in making materials available to me.

A word of thanks is in order to Mrs. Ann Jones who typed the manuscript as a labor of love, and to Mrs. Hilda Rifkin for proofreading it. Above all I am grateful to my wife who endured the years of work and often enabled me to find the necessary time for the project.

Pitman, New Jersey
July, 1969

Joseph R. Sweeny

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a study of Elhanan Winchester and his relationship to the Baptists and the Universalists. In the history of Universalism in America,[1] John Murray and Hosea Ballou are the best known names. Although he has been largely overlooked by students of American religion in general and by students of the Universalist movement in particular, Elhanan Winchester played a significant part in the beginnings of Universalism in America and England.

In the course of this study I shall endeavor to provide some understanding of the man and of the influences that shaped his decision to become a Universalist. In addition, this work traces the involvement of the Baptists in the development of Universalism. That the Baptists were greatly affected by Universalism is apparent from reading the minutes of various Baptist associations and churches. The minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association reveal the extensive inroads Universalism made into the churches of that association. This work shows that the Baptists were far more affected by Universalism than has been generally supposed. In order to fully appreciate the impact Universalism had on them and the potential threat it posed to them, it is important to understand the character of the Baptists in the latter half of the eighteenth century. As strict Calvinists, the Baptists believed in the salvation of the elect only. Universalism struck at the core of their belief. Through absorption of the Separates into the Baptist churches, the Baptists had been awakened and had experienced remarkable growth. The popularity of the salvation of all men threatened to diminish the Baptist impact. The Baptist reaction was quick and decisive. Those who adopted universal salvation were excommunicated and the churches warned to beware of them. Nevertheless, along with revivalism, Universalism tended to ameliorate the harsh Calvinistic creed of the Baptists. In turn that made the Baptists even more popular in the succeeding years.

---

[1] Universalism has a long history dating back to the first centuries of Christian history. For an interesting account of that history see Hosea Ballou, 2d, Ancient History of Universalism (Boston: Marsh and Capen, 1829); see also Thomas Whittemore, Modern History of Universalism from the Reformation to the Present Time (Boston: Published by the author, 1830).

A third concern of this dissertation is to determine the position and influence of Winchester in the broader stream of Universalism in England and America. Most of Winchester's books, many of his sermons, and his collections of hymns and poems have been preserved. They provide a vast store of materials from which to ascertain his theological beliefs. That he remained in essential agreement with the orthodox teachings of the Baptist confession becomes quite clear. His heterodoxy appeared only in his notion of universal salvation and its consequences for the doctrine of the atonement. The section devoted to Winchester's formulation of universal restoration is brief because his numerous works are essentially a restatement of his basic ideas.

Among the Universalists of this period in history two main views are discovered. The Universalism of James Relly which was based on rigid Calvinism insisted that man was punished in this life for sin committed here. John Murray and Joseph Huntington adopted Relly's system. The other view was that of Winchester and Charles Chauncy, the famous Congregationalist preacher, which taught a limited punishment leading to the reformation of character. Congregationalists and Presbyterians, though concerned with Winchester, concentrated their energies in attempting to answer Chauncy, the highly literate preacher of unitarianism and universalism. They believed that to refute Chauncy was to refute Winchester since they both held the same view. Out of the attempts of John Smalley, Stephen West, and Jonathan Edwards, Jr., to answer Chauncy, the governmental theory of the atonement was developed and became widely accepted among New England Congregationalists.

By early in the nineteenth century Universalism had become unitarian and rationalistic. The influence of the Enlightenment shows most clearly in Hosea Ballou. Ballou was responsible for the radical change in Universalism from trinitarian pietism to unitarian rationalism. Winchester had been much impressed with young Ballou and ordained him as a Universalist preacher. Ballou had great affection for Winchester and always held him in high regard. His theology, however, was more the outgrowth of Enlightenment thought, and was especially dependent upon Ethan Allen's Reason the Only Oracle of Man.

Although he was indirectly influenced by the spirit of the Enlightenment, Winchester remained a firm believer in revelation and held the scriptures as divine revelation. For him reason was only a tool in interpretation, not a substitute for scripture. Reason for him must be conformed to scripture, not scripture to reason. Despite the radical change in Universalism under Ballou, Winchester's doctrine of limited punishment leading to the reformation of man's character was reaffirmed by the Boston Universalists in 1878.

Sources for the life of Winchester are few. In 1797, William Vidler preached a sermon on the death of Winchester which he later expanded and published under the title A Sketch of the Life of the Rev. Elhanan Winchester. Although Vidler was one of Winchester's closest associates during his stay in England, he knew little about Winchester's early years. His Sketch is helpful for the years Winchester spent in England. The Biography of Rev. Elhanan Winchester by Edwin Martin Stone, published in 1836, while the most complete picture we have of Winchester, suffers from his avowedly biased purpose in writing. Subsequent histories of Universalism have been dependent on Stone for information about Winchester. The most recent treatment, Charles White McGehee's article on Winchester in The Annual of the Universalist Historical Society, Volume I, 1959, is based primarily on secondary sources and relies heavily on Richard Eddy's Universalism in America (1884). Although Winchester did not leave a diary, he did describe his conversion to Universalism and the ensuing conflict in the 1792 edition of the Dialogues. Details of the conflict at the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia where Winchester was pastor from October 1780 to April 1781, are found in the minutes of that church, in An Address From the Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, to their Sister Churches, written by opponents of Winchester, and in Remarks upon a Pamphlet Intitled "An Address from the Baptist Church...," attributed to Winchester and his followers, who sought to present their account of what transpired there. The minutes of the Welsh Neck Church reveal details of Winchester's ministry in South Carolina.

Minutes of the churches and associations were examined to determine to what extent Universalism was a problem for the Baptists in the Enlightenment era. Minutes of the Universalists churches of Philadelphia are in the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and provided first hand information about the progress of Universalism. Diaries and papers of Baptist leaders and of other prominent contemporaries of Winchester were checked for references to his life and work. The theological views of the eighteenth century Universalists and their opponents were reconstructed from their sermons, letters, and other works.

CHAPTER I

THE BAPTIST CLIMATE: 1770-1800

In the last third of the eighteenth century, the Baptists in America increased at a most amazing rate. Writing in 1794, Noah Worcester, in Impartial Inquiries Respecting the Progress of the Baptist Denomination, began by saying "that there has been, within twenty years, a rapid increase of the baptist denomination, is a fact too evident to be disputed." He also indicated, however, that Universalism, Methodism, Shakerism and Deism had increased significantly during the same period of time.[1] Among the reasons which Worcester gave for the growth of the Baptists were the coldness of the Congregational denomination as opposed to the Baptist zeal, the persecution with which the Baptists had been treated, the confident approach of the Baptists, and their use of revivals. In the revival in New England in 1780, David Benedict reported that 2,000 persons had been baptized. Moreover, he indicated that between 1780 and 1789 more than 200 churches had been organized by the Baptists.[2]

---

[1] Noah Worcester, Impartial Inquiries Respecting the Progress of the Baptist Denomination (Worcester, Massachusetts: Leonard Worcester, 1794), pp. 3, 5.

[2] David Benedict, A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America, and Other Parts of the World (Boston: Printed by Lincoln and Edmands, 1813), I, 275.

In 1770 the Baptists listed 77 churches. By 1784 that had grown to 471, with 35,000 members. By 1792, the numbers had nearly doubled to 891 churches and 65,000 members. The report in 1812 incicated 2,165 churches and 173,000 members.[3]

The rapid growth of the Baptists from 1770 to 1800 can be accounted for in large measure through the Separate Movement.[4] The Separate Movement emerged out of the revivals 1740-1742. The Separates were not satisfied with the cautious approach to revivalism of Edwards. Instead they adopted the itinerant, zealous, emotional revivalistic methods of promoting the gospel. Distressed with the formalism and coldness of the Congregational churches, the Separates eventually organized their own churches. Numerous complaints were raised against the Congregational churches by the Separates, including those related to church order. The fact that persons were allowed to enter membership of the church without recounting a personal experience of the grace of God was most distressing. Efforts were made by the Separates to have the Halfway Covenant annulled. Objection was raised to the restriction of ordination and approval of ministers through an association of ministers. The Separates felt it was uncongregational to deny the churches the right to ordain the ministers. As Whitfield had indicated in his revivals, they felt that many of the clergy were unconverted and, therefore, objected to the compulsory support of the clergy. Side by side with their complaints in regard to church order were those in connection with theology. Over the years the practice of infant baptism had fostered the teaching of the necessity of nurture and the doctrine of preparation. Regeneration, therefore, was scarcely noticed under this system. In the popular mind salvation came to be regarded as chiefly a performance of religious duties. By contrast, in the revivals sudden conversion was the acceptable mode. The notion of nurture was viewed suspiciously and those who practiced the notion of nurture were viewed as Arminians. In the face of what they believed was growing Arminianism, the Separates reasserted the doctrine of sovereign grace. Salvation, they said, was entirely by God's grace and irresistible. Moreover, the Separates insisted that genuine faith had its own assurance of salvation. If assurance in the believer was lacking his salvation was to be questioned. The Congregationalists had always insisted that not only must one have personal conviction of his salvation but he must convince others of his salvation. Since the churches were to be composed of only the regenerate, tests were to be made of the convert. The Separates called this legalism, relying instead on a subjective judgment to test true faith. The established clergy opposed the itinerant ministry of the more revivalistic preachers and insisted that permission be sought from the local minister before preaching in his parish. In response the Separates raised serious questions about the conversion of the ministers who would not invite revivalists into their area. The use of lay preachers by the

---

[3] William Cathcart (ed.), The Baptist Encyclopedia (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881), p. 1324.

[4] For a careful study of the Separate Movement see C. C. Goen, Revivalism and Separatism in New England, 1740-1780 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

Separates also posed a threat to the established clergy. The Separates preferred an uneducated lay preacher to an unconverted clergy. The Baptists offered many of the very things for which the Separates were searching. It was not surprising that they should join together. The chief reason for the decline of the Separates was their conversion to Baptist sentiments especially in the frontier regions.[5]

Not only were individuals converted to the Baptist denomination, but whole churches converted bodily.[6] There were also some mixed communion churches among the Separates, such as Isaac Backus' church at Middleborough, in which for a time infant baptism and immersion of adults were both accepted practices. Because of doctrinal conflicts, the Separate Baptists were not at home with the General Baptists, but merged readily with the Calvinistic Baptists, eventually forming the Warren Association in New England. Through the absorption of the Separates, the Baptists became a revivalistic denomination, though previously untouched by the Whitfield revivals.

During this same period the Baptists moved in the direction of an educated ministry. Prior to this time ministers had been chosen from among the pious within the congregation. They were chosen particularly for their gifts in preaching. In 1764, Rhode Island College, later Brown University, was chartered as the seventh college in America. The next year, Rev. James Manning was selected president and the first students were admitted. The first of the students to enroll was William Rogers who was to play an important part in the conflict in Philadelphia in 1781. The idea to establish a college had first been brought to the attention of the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1762, by Morgan Edwards, the noted Baptist historian, who at that time was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia. The college curriculum involved the usual rigorous studies in Latin and Greek, geography, rhetoric, logic, moral philosophy, arithmetic, and algebra. As might be suspected, there were those who were heartily opposed to the prospect of an educated clergy. Others feared that the college through its disciplines would provide the opening wedges for deviation from orthodoxy. Attempts were made to provide for the maintenance of orthodoxy and the expulsion of those who deviated from the orthodox positions. The rules of the college stated:

---

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 206.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 224.

> It is ordered and enacted, that if any student of this College shall deny the being of a God, the existence of virtue and vice; or that the books of the Old and New Testaments are of divine authority, or suggest any scruples of that nature, or circulate books of such pernicious tendency, or frequent the company of those who are known to favor such fatal errors, he shall for the second offence, be absolutely and forever expelled from this College.[7]

The charter provisions of the college included four denominations. All teaching positions were to be open to people of any denomination. The president, however, was required to be a Baptist.[8]

The Baptists in eighteenth century America were divided theologically over the extent of the atonement for sinners. The Calvinistic Particular Baptists maintained that the atonement was limited to the elect, while the General Baptists who followed an Arminian position extended the atonement to all sinners. By the middle of the century the Particular Baptist churches, which had formed the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1707, exercised a strong influence on the theological views of most of the churches. In 1742 the Philadelphia Association adopted the London Confession of Particular Baptists of 1689, in order to provide a basis for doctrinal agreement. The Confession of 1689, was a reprint of the Confession of 1677, which was a revision of the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterian Church prepared by a Particular Baptist minister named Collins.[9]

---

[7] Reuben A. Guild, Early History of Brown University (Providence: Printed by Snow and Farnham, 1897), p. 271.

[8] William W. Keen, The Early Years of Brown University (N.p., n.d.), p. 9.

Subsequently other associations and churches adopted the Philadelphia Confession. As early as 1767 the Charleston Association had accepted it with the consequence that the churches of South Carolina tended individually to adopt it. In 1788, the delegates to the Philadelphia Association annual meeting heard letters read which had been received from the Stonington Association in Connecticut and the Salisbury Association in New Hampshire, indicating their agreement with the Confession.[10] At the time the New York churches created their own association, having formerly been part of the Philadelphia Association, they added to the constitution a brief statement acknowledging their approval of the Confession:

---

[9] Robert G. Torbet, A History of the Baptists (Rev. ed.; Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1955), p. 87; William T. Whitley, A History of British Baptists (London: Charles Griffin & Co., Ltd., 1923), p. 181.

[10] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, from 1707 to 1807 (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1851), p. 236.

> In fine, we approve the Baptist Confession of Faith as adopted and held by the Association of Philadelphia, as happily expressing our sentiments contained in the holy scriptures of divine truth; which we acknowledge as our only certain rule of faith and practice.[11]

New Jersey Baptists eventually constituted their own association requiring ministers at their ordination council to indicate their agreement with the Confession.and advising the churches to incorporate the Confession in their covenants and require the members of the congregation to sign it.[12]

In contrast to the action taken by the New Jersey Association, the Baptists of Virginia were concerned not to allow the Confession to be used as an instrument to enforce uniformity. This, of course, was due to the strong Separate group which feared the loss of evangelistic zeal and personal piety. The stance of the Virginia Baptists is declared in their Plan of Union adopted in 1787.

> After a long debate about the utility of adopting a Confession of faith, agreed to receive the Regular Baptists. But to prevent its usurping a tyrannical power over the consciences of any, we do not mean that every person is bound to the strict observance of every thing therein contained: yet that it holds forth the essential truths of the gospel, and that the doctrine of salvation by Christ, and free unmerited grace alone, ought to be believed by every Christian, and maintained by every minister

---

[11] Minutes of the New York Baptist Association, April 12, 1791, "For the Purpose of Constituting an Association."

[12] A Treatise of Church Discipline, Compiled by a Committee of the New Jersey Baptist Association (Philadelphia, 1821).

> of the gospel. And that the terms, Regular and Separate shall be buried in oblivion; and that from henceforth, we shall be known by the name of the United Baptist Church in Virginia.[13]

Torbet summed up the impact of the Confession on the Baptists in America when he wrote:

> The lengthy Philadelphia Confession (the London Particular Baptist Confession of 1689 adopted by the Philadelphia Association in 1742) which had been accepted in 1767 by the Charleston Association, had more influence in the older coastal cities than in the back country churches. Yet it did color Baptist thought generally, for the covenants adopted by most churches reflected its spirit and expressed its point of view in briefer form.[14]

To understand the Baptists in the eighteenth century, it will be helpful to examine briefly the main articles of the Philadelphia Confession of 1742. The Confession begins with the assertion that the holy scriptures are infallible, having been inspired by God. The books of the Old and New Testaments are named so that there should be no confusion as to which books comprised the scriptures. It is made clear that the apocryphal writings are not part of the canon. The scriptures contain the whole counsel of God concerning those things that are necessary for his glory, and for man's salvation, faith, and life.

The trinity is affirmed to be "three subsistences" yet "of One substance, Power and Eternity, each having the whole Divine Essence."[15] The strong Calvinistic tone of the Confession shows in the doctrine of predestination in which the elect are bestowed the gift of eternal life by the pure act of God's grace. Those not predestined to eternal life are left in their sins to their just condemnation.

---

[13] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 233.

[14] Torbet, op.cit., p. 249.

[15] A Confession of Faith, . . . Adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, September 25, 1742. (6th ed., Philadelphia: Printed by B. Franklin, 1743), p. 19.

The classical understanding of the nature of Christ is clearly affirmed. In Jesus,

> two whole, perfect, and distinct Natures, were inseparably joined together in one Person, without Conversion, Composition, or Confusion; which Person is very God, and very Man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and Man.[16]

On the cross Jesus took upon himself the sin of mankind dying in the place of man to pay the penalty of his sin, thus fully satisfying the justice of God. Christ rose from the grave and ascended into heaven where he continues his mediatorial work.

The world came into being by divine creative act in which all persons of the trinity shared. The creation was accomplished in six days. The world is upheld, directed, and governed by divine providence. Whatever happens in the world is by the decree of God, not the result of chance. The decree of God is the first cause "yet by the same Providence he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second Causes."[17]

Man was created upright and perfect yet Adam sinned, bringing death to man. Now dead in sin by the fall, man is wholly defiled in all parts of his soul and body. The corrupted nature which is inherited by all posterity remains in the regenerated even though they are pardoned.

---

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

In his original state man had the ability to choose, to will freely. By the fall man fell into a state of sin and wholly lost all ability of will. Unable to will good man must depend upon the gracious mercy of God. When God converts a man he enables him freely to will. The converted man may choose good and evil, his will being perfected only in the state of glory.

Elect infants and others who are incapable of being outwardly called are saved by the grace of God. Those who are not called cannot come to Christ.

By the free grace of God man is justified. His sins are pardoned for Christ's sake. Grace is received by faith which itself is the gift of God, the instrument of Justification.

Good works are the "Fruits or Evidences of true and lively Faith."[18] Eternal life cannot be earned. It is wholly the gift of the spirit of Christ. The works of the unregenerate man, although they may be used of God, are sinful and cannot please God, yet he is held accountable for his works.

Those who are accepted by God cannot fall away from the grace of God but will persevere to the end.

> Notwithstanding, through Unbelief and the Temptations of Satan, the sensible Sight of the Light and Love of God, may for a Time be clouded and obscured from them, yet it is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the Power of God unto Salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased Possession, they being engraven upon the Palm of His Hands, and their Names having been written in the Book of Life from all Eternity.[19]

The believer can have the assurance of salvation which is founded on Christ, revealed in the gospel, and known through the witness of the Spirit with man's spirit "keeping the Heart both humble and holy."[20] The assurance of salvation does not belong to the essence of faith, yet it is the "Duty of every one, to give all diligence to make their Calling and Election sure."[21]

---

[18] Ibid., p. 57.

[19] Ibid., p. 62.

Early Baptists in England and America were severely persecuted for their religious views. That persecution led them to develop the doctrine of liberty of conscience.

> God alone is Lord of Conscience, and hath left it free from the Doctrines and Commandments of Men which are in any thing contrary to his Word, or not contained in it. So that to believe such Doctrines, or Obey such Commands out of Conscience, is to betray true Liberty of Conscience; and the Requiring of an implicit Faith, and absolute and blind Obedience, is to destroy Liberty of Conscience and Reason also.[22]

From the above passage it is clear that those things which cannot be found expressly in the scriptures are not to be required of any believer. It is assumed conversely that what the scriptures contain is plain for all to see.

The church is composed of all those who profess faith in the gospel of Christ and who seek to live an exemplary life. All congregations are to be composed of these "visible Saints."[23] To be received into the fellowship of the congregation one had to be baptized by immersion as a believer. Infant baptism was no baptism at all. All baptized believers received the laying on of hands "to confirm, strengthen, and comfort them in Christ Jesus."[24] The Lord's Supper was to be observed as a "perpetual remembrance." It was "only a Memorial of that one offering up of himself, by himself, upon the cross, once for all."[25]

---

[20] Ibid., p. 65

[21] Ibid., p. 66.

[22] Ibid., pp. 76-77.

[23] Ibid., p. 90.

The Confession concludes with sections on heaven and hell and the last judgment. After death the bodies of men return to the dust from which they sprang. The souls of men neither die nor sleep, but immediately return to God. The souls of the righeous are made perfect and enter paradise with Christ where they wait for the full redemption of their bodies. The souls of the wicked are cast into hell where they remain in torment and utter darkness until the Judgment Day. At the last day the saints who are alive shall enter into rewards of joy and glory, and the dead in Christ shall be raised "with the self-same Bodies, and none other."[26]

The purpose of the Judgment Day is for God to manifest his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect and to manifest his justice in the damnation of the wicked. At that time apostate angels and all men shall appear before the throne of God to be judged for their thoughts, words, and deeds. The elect enter God's heavenly kingdom, but,

> the Wicked who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into Eternal Torments, and punished with Everlasting Destruction, from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power."[27]

---

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

To assist in the understanding of the various articles contained in the Confession, the Philadelphia Association accepted at the meeting in May, 1774, a plan for their annual letter to the churches which called for observations on some article of faith, beginning with the first, to caution churches against "innovation in doctrine and practice, and to watch against errors, and avoid them wherever they rise, and by whomsoever they may be propagated," to endeavor to resolve questions raised by the churches, and to give advice and counsel to the churches.[28]

The first letter to be sent to all the churches under the newly adopted plan was a statement on the Scriptures, written by Abel Morgan, pastor of the church at Middletown, New Jersey. In it Morgan asserted that,

> these holy writings are of God, divinely inspired,...the infallible ground of faith and certain rule of obedience,... full and complete in all its parts, historical, doctrinal, and prophetical.[29]

This practice helped produce conformity doctrinally, while at the same time elevating the role of the Association to that of official interpreter. Horatio Gates Jones underlined the Association's understanding of its strong influence:

---

[28] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 136.

[29] "A circular letter on the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures," in the Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 137.

> In every period of its existence the Association has firmly maintained the soundest form of Scripture doctrine; nor could any church have been admitted, at any period, which denied or concealed any of the doctrines of grace.[30]

The Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association included numerous questions raised by the individual churches and answered by the Association at its stated meetings. Such questions were concerned with church practices and doctrinal beliefs. In response to queries about the divinity of Christ in 1743, the Association reaffirmed its trinitarian position and cautioned against undue reliance on human reason:

> We pray you would content yourselves and be satisfied with the revealed will of God, concerning the unutterable, as well as inconceivable, mysteries of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three in one, and one in three, the co-essentiality, the co-eternity, and co-equality, of the three glorious Persons in one eternal God; and that you suffer not a vain and over-curious search to be made thereunto by human reason and worldly wisdom. A number in one of our churches having suffered themselves to inquire therein, according to aforesaid rules of human reason and worldly wisdom, having been so entangled and confused, that they were carried so far as to question the Sonship of the second Person, as he is God, without having reference to his manhood and mediatory offices, which conception and supposition we not only disallow, but abhor and condemn, and are glad that God hath blessed means to convince the said parties of their sin and error; and herein we were nemine contra dicente, fully united to repel, and put a stop to; as far as we may, unto the Arian, Socinian, and Anti-trinitarian systems; protesting unto the world our joint belief of and our resolution to maintain, the eternal and inconceivable generation of the second Person in the ever adorable Trinity; and have, we hope, prevailed effectually, so as to bring the persons chiefly concerned, as questioning the same, to a free confession of their mistake therein.[31]

---

[30] Horatio Gates Jones, Preface to the Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 4.

[31] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 48.

The extent of the Philadelphia Association's influence is noted in the minutes of 1748. The Horseneck church in New England wrote and asked if it is error to deny the foreknowledge of God concerning future good and evil, to which it received reply that it is error because it supposes God to be imperfect. A second query asked if a member should be censured for persistently endeavoring to propagate the view that God does not have foreknowledge of future good and evil. The answer is extremely important for it shows the measure of conformity required. In such case, the Association ruled the person deserves the highest censure despite the fact that he pleads conscience.[32]

The power and duty of an association is spelled out in an essay on that subject in the Philadelphia Association minutes of 1749.

1. The Association is not a superior judicatory.
2. Each church has complete authority from Christ regarding ordinances (baptism and communion), discipline, and ordination.
3. Churches ought for mutual good and by free consent enter into association. They should be agreed on doctrine and practice before entering confederation.
4. The Association is subservient to the churches.
5. The Association has power arising from confederation to withdraw from churches on the basis of defection in doctrine or practice.

The last point is the focal one. It is elaborated further in the essay:

> Though no power can regularly arise above its fountain from where it arises, yet we are of opinion, that an Association of the delegates of associate churches have a very considerable power in their hands, respecting those churches in their confederation; for if the agreement of several distinct churches, in sound doctrine and regular practice, be

---

[32] Ibid., p. 58.

> the first motive, ground, and foundation or basis of their confederation, then it must naturally follow that a defection in doctrine or practice in any church, in such confederation, or any party in any such church, is ground sufficient for an Association to withdraw from such a church or party so deviating or making defection, and to exclude such from them in such formal manner, and to advertise all the churches in confederation thereof, in order that every church in confederation may withdraw from such in all acts of church communion, to the end they may be ashamed, and that all churches may discountenance such, and bear testimony against the defection.[33]

It has been pointed out already that discipline was a vital part of church life for the early Baptists. In this manner they endeavored to maintain a pure church. At the same time it adopted the Confession of Faith the Association promulgated a treatise on church discipline which it published with the Confession. Of particular interest in the discipline are the articles dealing with admission to the church and church censures.

To be admitted to the church it was necessary to pass three tests. One had to be able to stand up in public meeting and recount his experience of God--telling how he was saved. This testimony was basic. Without it the other tests meant little. In addition, it was necessary to show a competent knowledge of doctrine. This meant, in effect, being able to affirm the essential doctrines concerning the scriptures, God, Christ and others as they are presented in the Confession. The final test was to demonstrate a quality of life that was free of any known sin and above reproach.

Those who were members of the church but who sinned and brought reproach upon themselves or the church were subject to church censure. The most common type of censure was admonition, "a holy, tender and wise Endeavour, to convince a Brother, that hath offended in Matter of Fact...thereby leading him to his Duty and true Reformation."[34] Admonition took place in private by one or more leaders of the church. When an accusation was made about a member he was suspended while a committee investigated the case. Suspension was practiced when the irregularity did not warrant excommunication. Excommunication was employed when a member would not submit to reproof of his actions, when a member had committed such gross sins as gambling, drinking, and adultery, or when a member was found "to be erroneous, defective, or heretical in some fundamental Point."[35]

---

[33] Ibid., p. 61.

---

[34] A Confession of Faith, "A Short Treatise on Church Discipline," p. 40.

[35] Ibid., p. 45.

CHAPTER II

ELHANAN WINCHESTER: UNIVERSAL BAPTIST

Herbert Morais concluded that "among the early Universalists, the most eminent for learning and intellect was a former Baptist clergyman, Elhanan Winchester."[1] Winchester was a self-taught man who attended only the common school. Nevertheless, he was both learned and intelligent. By the age of five he could read and never missed an opportunity to find books to capture his imagination. His favorite book was the Bible. He managed on his own to learn Latin, French, Greek and Hebrew.[2]

His unusual memory is demonstrated in an incident recorded by Stone. Elhanan's father was a very religious man and a member of the Separate church in Brookline, Massachusetts. He required his children to remember the preacher's text and repeat it to him after returning home from the meeting. On one occasion after having been told by his father to pay particular attention to the sermon and text of the preacher, Elhanan with his brothers and sisters went to meeting. Upon arriving at the meeting house, Elhanan went up to the gallery and sat down in the front row. His father was furious with Elhanan for not sitting with him so that he could discipline him if necessary. However, where he sat he could observe Elhanan's actions. As he watched he became extremely annoyed. Elhanan seemed to be paying no attention to the sermon but kept looking all around the meeting house. When they reached home following the service, Elhanan's father began to reprimand him for his inattention. Elhanan insisted that he had been attentive and proceeded to recite the text, including chapter and verse. His father was pleased but still disturbed at his gazing around. Elhanan told his father he also remembered part of the sermon which he proceeded to outline and recalled almost verbatim. In addition, he told his father how many people were present, the number of beams, posts, braces, rafters, and panes of glass in the meeting house.[3] Whether or not this story is apocryphal it indicates that Winchester had a prodigious memory.

---

[1] Herbert Morais, Deism in 18th Century America (New York: Russell and Russell, 1960), p. 88.

[2] Edwin M. Stone, Biography of Rev. Elhanan Winchester (Boston: H. B. Brewster, 1836), p. 14. William Vidler suggests that Winchester did not learn to read until he was fourteen. If that were so, Winchester could not have completed the grammar school education. See William Vidler, A Sketch of the Life of Elhanan Winchester (London: Printed by T. Gillet for the author, 1797), p. 6. Vidler evidently did not know the details of Winchester's life in America. He mistakenly calls the church of Winchester's father a Calvinistic Baptist Church. From Brookline, Vidler has Winchester going directly to Welsh Neck. In so doing Vidler passes over the years 1771 to 1774. Late in 1774 Winchester left for South Carolina, arriving in 1775, Ibid., p. 9.

The Winchester family came to America among the Welsh who settled here early in the seventeenth century. The senior Elhanan Winchester was a mechanic and farmer. His first wife died before any children were born. His second wife Sarah bore him six children, the eldest of which was Elhanan, born September 30, 1751. By his third wife he fathered nine more children. He died in 1810 at the age of ninety-one.[4]

---

[3] Stone, op. cit., pp. 16-18.

At age nineteen, Winchester became "savingly acquainted with Christ," publicly proclaimed his faith, and united with the Separate church in Brookline, of which Rev. Jonathan Hyde was the pastor.[5] Winchester told of his conversion after much seeking of spiritual peace.

> I laboured night and day, but could find no rest, till one morning—a time never to be forgotten!—as I was walking on a Journey, under great distress, and when deliverance seemed farther from me than ever, all at once I was brought to resign my soul into the hands of God, and thus I expressed myself—"Lord, here I am, a poor helpless sinner; I resign myself into thine hands; take me, and deal with me just as thou pleasest: I know thou canst do me no injustice." Immediately these words came into my mind with great power and sweetness—"In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee." Isaiah xlix. 8. And I had then such a view of Christ as made me to cry out, "Glory to God in the highest! This is salvation; I know this is salvation!"[6]

This deeply moving spiritual experience remained with Winchester throughout his life which was characterized by an evangelical piety. The effect of his conversion was not lost in his subsequent theological changes. Winchester in writing about this experience years later indicated that this helped him to see how Christ was able to save all men, and it led him to want to serve Christ.

---

[4] Ibid., p. 10. Once again Vidler was mistaken for he assumed that Elhanan was one of the younger of thirteen children. Vidler, op. cit., p. 5.

[5] Stone, op. cit., p. 19.

[6] Elhanan Winchester, The Universal Restoration Exhibited in a Series of Dialogues (4th ed. rev.; London: Printed by W. Burton, 1799), pp. 105-106.

> Then those passages which you have mentioned came into my mind with great energy; and I saw the fulness, sufficiency, and willingness of Christ to save me, and all men, in such manner, as constrained me to venture my soul into his arms; and if I had had ten thousand souls, I could have trusted them all in his hands. And O, how did I long, that every soul of Adam's race might come to know the love of God in Christ Jesus! And I thought I could not be willing to live any longer on earth, unless it might please God to make me useful to my fellow-creatures.[7]

The conversion experience recounted above is set in the context of conversation with a friend in which Winchester recalled being saved by God's power. He was attempting to convince the friend that experiential religion is consistent with universal restoration.

It is clear, however, that at the time of his conversion Winchester did not interpret his conversion as a conversion to universal restoration. Shortly after this conversion experience he had an encounter with a woman who was a believer in universal salvation. From his Calvinist teachings he rejected her assertion that Christ died for all the world insisting that Christ died only for the elect. It was impossible that the spirit of God could have made known to her the truth that all would find salvation in Christ.[8]

In the fall of 1769, Winchester married the first of five wives. Each marriage was filled with misery. Alice Rogers, his first wife, lived five and-a-half years after the marriage and died in Fairfax County, Virginia, while they were on their way to Welsh Neck where Winchester was pastor. Mrs. Winchester was taken ill during the trip in the fall of 1775, so Winchester left her with friends while he went on to Welsh Neck, returning in April 1776 to find she had died in labor. She had borne him a son still-born and a daughter who lived seventeen months, in the course of their marriage.

---

[7] _Ibid._, pp. 105-106.

[8] _Ibid._, pp. 106-107.

Shortly after his first marriage, Winchester visited Canterbury, Connecticut, where he experienced a change in his religious views and was baptized by immersion by Elder Ebenezer Lyon and joined the open communion Baptist church there, and soon began preaching.[9] A contemporary of his, the Reverend Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College from 1778 to 1795, wrote of Elhanan in his diary, "About 1772 or 1773, he turned Baptist, & came forth a loquacious and flam^{g} preacher."[10]

In the spring of 1771 he left Canterbury and went to the Baptist church at Rehoboth, Massachusetts, and conducted a series of revivals there with large crowds attending his meetings. With the converts from that revival he organized an open communion Baptist church.

---

[9] Isaac Backus casts a less favorable light on Winchester's early ministry. He recalled that Winchester began preaching at the Separate church in Brookline in October of 1770, but was soon barred from preaching there because his father's maid was found pregnant and named him as the father. He refused to confess it, Backus said, alleging that they were already married, without necessity of a legal ceremony. Shortly thereafter he left Brookline, was baptized and joined the Canterbury church in the winter of 1771. Before they would ordain him he had to confess his failure to have the marriage ceremony performed. Isaac Backus, History of New England with Particular Attention to the Denomination Called Baptists (2d ed.; Newton, Massachusetts: Published by the Backus Historical Society, 1871), II, 441-442.

[10] Franklin Bowditch Dexter (ed.), The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), p. 388.

According to the open communion plan persons could commune whether baptized as infants or immersed. From September 4, when he organized the new church at Rehoboth until October 22, when he visited Backus, he had baptized thirty persons. Backus wrote in his Diary concerning that visit, "He appears to be a man of good sense, and to have many just notions about religion, though in others inexperienced and rash."[11] In less than a year, Winchester adopted the close communion plan causing a commotion in the church. Winchester was suspended from preaching by the church. Because of the dissension he went travelling to New Hampshire and Vermont. On his return he stopped at Grafton, Massachusetts, and preached there throughout the summer adding thirty converts. He also preached in the neighboring towns of Northbridge and Upton. Returning to Rehoboth he found the dissension continuing and called a council of ministers in December 1772 to mediate between the church and him. The council decided that he had left error and joined truth, but advised him to unite with another church.[12]

Subsequently, Winchester went to Bellingham and joined the church there. While in Bellingham he renounced Arminianism and adopted the strict Calvinism of Dr. John Gill, the leading theologian and minister of the Particular Baptists of London. Gill's works were widely circulated among Baptists in England and America. Winchester soon was acknowledged as "one of the most thorough Calvinist preachers in the country."[13] Some time after joining the church at Bellingham, Winchester was to be ordained an evangelist, but he insisted on his ultra-Calvinist position that ministers had no "right to call or invite sinners, as sinners, now to come to Christ." The council called for that purpose refused to ordain him an evangelist.[14]

---

[11] Diary, October 22, 1771, in Backus, op. cit., II, 442.

[12] Ibid., II, 439; Stone, op. cit., p. 22.

Always a travelling preacher, Winchester spent the years 1773 and 1774 preaching in towns throughout Massachusetts. He returned to Brookline and preached with great success. Many of those who belonged to the Separate church of his father heard him and became Baptists. Evidently his father remained in the Separate church.[15]

Among those converted during the ministry of Winchester in these years was the outstanding Baptist leader John Leland. Leland related his experience in the summer of 1772 when he was "frolicking" and going to dances. He felt convicted by God for his actions. About that time Winchester came into Grafton and carried on his preaching ministry. The young woman with whom Leland had gone to the dances was converted under Winchester's preaching. Leland recalled: "When I heard the report, it greatly effected me, for I had been at many dances with her. The result with me was, now the waters are troubled, and it is time for me to step in." A little later Winchester returned to Grafton and Leland went to hear him.

---

[13] Stone, op. cit., p. 23. [14] Backus, op. cit., II, 442-3.

[15] Stone, op. cit., p. 23.

> When I went to meeting, I heard the man preach, and while he was preaching, something kept answering in my breast, yes, yes, yes, it is so. After he had done, I question whether all the men in the world could have convinced me it was not the truth.[16]

In 1784, Leland recalled that he travelled to Philadelphia with Winchester, causing the Baptists in Philadelphia to close their pulpits to him fearing he was a Universalist.[17]

Late in 1774, Winchester set out for Charleston, South Carolina, stopping along the way at Hopewell, New Jersey, where he was inoculated against smallpox. Oliver Hart recorded Winchester's brief stay in Charleston. "On Friday, Feb. 3, 1775, Rev. Elhanan Winches arrived here from Rehoboth in New England, and on Monday ye 27th, he left Chas Town on his return home."[18] In March, 1775, Winchester was called to be the minister of the Particular Baptist Church at Welsh Neck situated on the Great Peedee River in South Carolina. The Welsh Neck church was organized in 1737 when a group of some thirty migrants from the Welsh Tract in Delaware settled on the Great Peedee and named the community in remembrance of their former settlement. After the death of his wife the distraught Winchester went to Boston where he supplied the pulpit of the First Baptist Church during the summer. In the course of his stay in Boston, he married Sarah Peck of Rehoboth.

---

[16] L. F. Greene (ed.), The Writings of Elder John Leland (New York: Printed by G. W. Wood, 1845), pp. 10-11; Herbert M. Morais, Life and Works of Elder John Leland (Unpublished M.A. thesis at Columbia University; New York, 1928), p. 6.

[17] Leland, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[18] Oliver Hart, A Copy of Original Diary of Rev. Oliver Hart, p. 9. This brief diary covers only the years from 1749 to 1780.

In the autumn of 1776, after the summer in Boston, Winchester conducted a successful revival in Welsh Neck resulting in the baptizing of forty new members including the second Mrs. Winchester.

Winchester wrote concerning his predecessor at Welsh Neck, the Rev. Nicholas Bedggood, who served as pastor from 1759 to 1766 and returned as pastor in 1767 and served until 1770, "notwithstanding all his abilities and endowments, he was never very successful."[19] In contrast to Bedggood, Winchester's ministry, including his stay in Welsh Neck, was productive of many converts.

Tragedy struck again when his second wife died in 1777. Winchester suffered from a severe bout with fever which brought him near the point of death. He never seemed to recover fully from that sickness which left him in a generally weakened condition throughout the remainder of his short life. In 1778, he married Sarah Luke of South Carolina, but she lived less than a year after they were married.

Following the common practice among the Baptist churches, the Welsh Neck church elected Winchester to serve as pastor for one year, subject to renewal by mutual agreement. On March 8, 1776, his pastorate was renewed for another year and he was received into membership, transferring from the First Baptist Church in Bellingham, Massachusetts. At the same meeting two delegates were chosen to represent the congregation at the Charleston Association meeting to be held in High Hills of Santee in April. Of vital concern to the Association was the quest for religious freedom. This is evident from the minutes of the church which indicate the importance of sending representatives to the meeting "in order to obtain our liberties, and freedom from religious tyranny or ecclesiastical oppression.[20] Winchester was instructed by his congregation to draw up a statement on religious liberty to be presented to the Association.[21] At its annual meeting the Association gave Winchester the responsibility of writing the circular letter on behalf of the Association for 1777. In that letter Winchester applauded the progress of the colonies in seeking independence and gave a fine statement of religious liberty.

---

[19] Welsh Neck Church Book, 1776, p. 16.

> We would inform you that, notwithstanding many Things look dark, and gloomy, yet there are others that give us no small Satisfaction; particularly these two, viz. 1st, That we are like to have a most excellent Civil Government established in this State; settled upon the most equitable Foundation, securing Liberty and Property to all well affected Subjects of the same. And, as this excellent Constitution is intended for our Safety and Happiness, in common with others, we recommend to you all to endeavour to support it, to the utmost of your Power. We are happy in being able to say, that there is not one in this Association, but heartily joins in the measures taken by America in general, and this State in particular, to secure our Liberties. 2dly, we heartily congratulate you on the Prospect of obtaining universal Religious Liberty in this State; an Event which must cause every generous Mind to rejoice; as by that every one may sit down under his own Vine, and under his own Fig Tree, and none to make him afraid, i.e. every Person may enjoy Ease, Liberty, and Property, without Molestation, or Interruption.[22]

---

[20] Ibid., p. 20.

[21] Unfortunately that statement has not been preserved. It is reflected in the circular letter of the Charleston Association of 1777 which Winchester wrote. "Circular Letter of 1777," in Wood Furman (comp.), A History of the Charleston Association of Baptist Churches (Charleston, S. C.: From the Press of J. Hoff, 1811).

[22] Ibid.

In a later publication, A Plain Political Catechism, Winchester expands on his view of religious liberty by pointing out that the measure of religious freedom which they had attained since the revolution teaches that religious establishment is not necessary for the health of Christianity. Rather the freedom to belong to whatever sect one desires, to think freely, and to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences destroys animosity and strife, bigotry, persecution, and intolerance, and promotes peace among various denominations of Christians. Moreover, it is consistent with natural rights because it places them all on an equality.[23]

As the result of the pressure of Virginia Baptists, including John Leland, the General Assembly of Virginia passed in 1779, a bill providing that no one be compelled "to frequent or support" any religious group or minister. All men were to be free to profess their own opinions in matters of religion. Their civil rights should not be infringed because of their beliefs. The bill passed with a majority of nineteen votes. The teachings of these men were reflected in the preamble. Among the principles laid down were that to compel a man to support religious opinions in which he did not believe would be a form of tyranny. Even to force him to support his own religious persuasion would deprive him of his freedom to contribute to whatever cause he might choose. A tremendously significant step toward full religious freedom is embodied in the proposition that civil rights are not dependent on religious opinions. To deprive a man from holding office because of his religious views would be a violation of his natural rights. A further principle enunciated was that the opinions of men are not the object of civil government and are not under its jurisdiction. The civil magistrate should interfere only when opinions turn into overt acts against peace and good order.

---

[23] Elhanan Winchester, A Plain Political Catechism (Greenfield, Mass.: From the Press of T. Dickman, 1796), p. 84.

This progress in the direction of religious liberty was possible because of the alliance of the natural rights advocates with the Baptists and Presbyterians. The influence of "enlightened" men is seen in the statement that truth is great enough to prevail against error without the aid of the magistracy unless disarmed of her two natural weapons, free argument and debate.[24]

The spring of 1778 saw Winchester in poor health and preparing to leave his charge. When invited to serve as pastor again in 1779, he agreed to accept if the church would allow him to leave anytime he chose to do so. In September, 1779, Winchester concluded his ministry at Welsh Neck.

---

[24] A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom, Printed for the Consideration of the People. This is a hand-copied edition of the bill. A note at the bottom of the manuscript indicates it was copied by President Manning and subsequently printed in the Providence Gazette, May 13, 1780, and afterward in the Worcester paper. An additional note in the hand of Isaac Backus informs us that the bill was passed November, 1779, by a majority of nineteen votes. It tells us that John Leland informed Winchester of the passage of the bill in a letter from Virginia, March 15, 1780. Samuel Jones came into possession of the hand-copied bill and sent it to Backus, April 17, 1780.

While pastor at Welsh Neck, Winchester had many additions to the church membership. In the last year of his ministry he baptized 240 into membership. Among those baptized was a large number of Negroes. Previous to his ministry there were no Negroes admitted to the church. The church records show that on June 27, 1779, 5 Negro slaves were baptized, "Mingo (servant of Mr. Aaron David), Plato, Stephen, Darien, and Leannah servants of Col McIntosh."[25] During June, July, and August, 1779, 87 Negroes were received. The Negroes were constituted by Winchester into a separate church which he served in addition to his regular congregation. His successor, the Rev. Edmund Botsford, dissolved the separate church in 1782 and absorbed the Negroes into the white congregation. They were, however, a separate church within the white church and kept the pattern of black deacons.[26]

During his trip to South Carolina late in 1774, Winchester stopped in Fairfax County, Virginia, where he preached against slavery. Included in the Reigning Abominations to which he addressed himself in that December discourse were cursing, drunkenness, gaming, fighting, Sabbath-breaking, uncleanness, idleness, and slavery. He considered slavery more serious than all the other abominations.

> But above all, There is one abomination more that prevails in this country, that calls aloud not only for sighing and crying, but for a speedy reformation and turning therefrom, if we desire to prevent destruction from coming upon us; I mean, the SLAVE TRADE.
>
> A trade, conceived in iniquity, carried on in the most

---

[25] Welsh Neck Church Book, 1779, p. 20.

[26] Ibid., 1782, p. 30. In 1796, of 127 members listed, 64 were blacks, p. 228.

> base and barbarous manner, productive of the worst effects, and big with the most horrid and dangerous consequences....
>
> The most favourable construction that can be put upon the slave trade, is, that the desire of riches in general, and especially the hopes of growing suddenly rich, move men to engage therein.[27]

Winchester described the degrading manner in which the slave trade separated husbands from wives, and mothers from their children. He illustrated the cruelty with which slaves were treated and the hard-heartedness of their owners. People are rendered insensitive through slavery.

> The practice of keeping slaves cannot fail of hardening the hearts of mankind, for even little children are taught, from their cradles, to consider the poor creatures as their property, and to exercise the most brutal cruelties upon them without the least pity.[28]

Slavery is a capital crime, Winchester declared, and quoted the Old Testament on stealing and selling of people, "and he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death."[29] It is clear from his final admonition to those who kept slaves that he was no radical abolitionist.

> As for you that have them in possession, and cannot set them free by law, treat them well, and wait for the time when you may be able to give them liberty, which is the greatest blessing next to life.[30]

---

[27] Elhanan Winchester, The Reigning Abominations, Especially the Slave Trade (London: Printed and Sold by H. Trapp, 1788), pp. 15-17.

[28] Ibid., p. 24. [29] Exodus 21:16.

[30] Winchester, op. cit., p. 32.

Despite his avowed opposition to slavery, Winchester did not begin preaching to the Negroes until 1779. His awakening interest in the salvation of the slaves is recounted in the introduction to the 1792 edition of The Universal Restoration Exhibited in Four Dialogues, commonly referred to as the Dialogues.

> About this time I began to find uncommon desires for the conversion and salvation of the poor negroes, who were very numerous in that part of the country; but whom non of my predecessors that I could learn, had ever taken pains to instruct in the principles of Christianity; neither had any single slave, either man, or woman been baptized until that summer, in the whole parish (which was very large) that I ever heard of.[31]

Winchester said that the slaves were prejudiced against Christianity because of the severities with which they were treated. Because of this, he added, they would not attend religious instruction. However, they "had no prejudice against me on that score," Winchester said, "as I never had any thing to do with slavery, but on the contrary condemned it."[32]

His first effort at preaching to the Negroes took place while he was preaching in the homes of one of his white members:

> But one evening seeing a great number of them at the door of the house where I was preaching, I found myself constrained as it were, to go to the door, and tell them, That Jesus Christ loved them, and died for them, as well as for us white people, and that they might come and believe in him, and welcome. And I gave them as warm and pressing an invitation as I

---

[31] Elhanan Winchester, The Universal Restoration, Exhibited in Four Dialogues (Philadelphia: Printed by T. Dobson, 1792), p. ix.

[32] Ibid.

could, to comply with the glorious gospel.[33]

This was the beginning of a continuing ministry to the slaves that was to crown the remainder of Winchester's ministry in Welsh Neck with a fruitful harvest of black souls.

> I continued to instruct them, and within three month from the first of June, I baptized more than thirty blacks belonging to that plantation, besides as many others, as in the whole made up one hundred, of which sixty three were men, and thirty-seven were women, all which were born in Africa, or immediately descended from such as were natives of that unhappy country.[34]

Though his ministry continued to be successful in numbers of converts, some of his parishioners were disturbed by his attempts to convert the slaves. They were fearful that the slaves might in hearing of the freedom in Christ seek to extend that freedom to their physical condition. Many refused to allow their slaves to attend any of the preaching services.

> Many of the white people were exceedingly averse to the slaves being christianized; many would not suffer those belonging to them to come and hear me, though the poor creatures begged it upon their knees, with the greatest earnestness.[35]

The many converts at Welsh Neck were duly noted in the minutes of the Charleston Association in November, 1779. Those minutes were read at the Philadelphia Baptist Association meeting in 1780, indicating that of the 300 baptisms recorded throughout the Charleston Association that year, 239 had taken place in three months at Welsh Neck.[36]

---

[33] Ibid., p. ix. A similar account is given in the notes which Winchester appended to the 1788 edition of the Reigning Abominations, pp. 25-26.

[34] Dialogues, 1792, p. x.

[35] Reigning Abominations, p. 27.

Botsford was not satisfied with many of Winchester's converts, insisting that they were not sufficiently trained in religious matters. The following note was written by Botsford in the church minutes recording his dissatisfaction.

> A great many of those baptized by Mr. Winchester have been excommunicated, both white and black; but the greater number of blacks; many of the latter upon examination appeared to be very ignorant of the nature of true religion.[37]

Whatever Winchester's failures may have been it is significant that no new members were added to the Welsh Neck church during the first four years of Botsford's pastorate.[38] The church at Welsh Neck continued to accept Negro members until 1867 when the Negroes withdrew to form their own church, electing a black pastor and deacons, with the full consent of the Welsh Neck congregation.[39] The church donated ground for burial lots to the newly established colored church.[40]

In addition to his leadership in the quest for religious liberty and in Christianizing the slaves, Winchester joined with the

---

[36] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1780, p. 170. The Welsh Neck Church Book lists 240 members added in 1779; June, July, August, 1779. See also the Historical Sketch of the Welsh Neck Baptist Church (Greenville, S.C., 1889), p. 38.

[37] Welsh Neck Church Book, p. 30.

[38] Ibid., p. 40.

[39] Ibid., p. 228.

[40] Ibid., p. 316.

Rev. Evan Pugh of the Cashaway church to help organize the St. David's Society. The St. David's Society planned to begin a seminary for the training of pastors. The War of Independence hindered the beginning of the seminary until 1785.[41]

In September, 1779, Winchester left South Carolina and traveled to New England where he remained some nine months preaching revivals with extraordinary success. In the autumn of 1780, he started his return to Welsh Neck, stopping off to visit friends in New York, and then continuing to Philadelphia where he was to represent the Warren Association at the Baptist Association annual meeting. While attending the Association meeting, Winchester was invited by the Baptist church in Philadelphia to become its pastor. It was not surprising that the important Philadelphia church should want Winchester. As a messenger from the Warren Association he carried the annual letter. The contents of that letter included an account of the important part Winchester had played in the revival of Baptists in New England. In the fall of 1779, 765 members had been added to the Warren Association and more than 1,000 had been baptized in Massachusetts although they had not yet been received as members.[42]

Five years earlier the Philadelphia church had endeavored unsuccessfully to induce Winchester to become its pastor while representing the Charleston Association at the Philadelphia Association annual meeting.[43]

---

[41] Minutes of the St. David's Society and a list of members may be found in the Welsh Neck Church Book, 1778.

[42] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1780, pp. 169-170.

The ministry at Philadelphia was brief and filled with unpleasantness. Beginning his pastorate in October, he found it abruptly terminated by the church in April of 1781. Once again crowds flocked to hear him preach. His reputation for outstanding preaching was confirmed by the necessity to find larger facilities. As early as January, 1781, there was discussion about Winchester being a restorationist. In March, a formal charge was lodged against him. The church was divided into two factions, those supporting Winchester and those seeking his ouster. The opposition forces succeeded in dismissing Winchester and proceeded to call another minister.

Winchester came to the adoption of the universal restoration over a period of several years when he was called upon to study Universalism and give answers to it. He considered his gradual surrender of Calvinism one of the important steps in leading him to become a restorationist. It was his preaching which led him away from Calvinism. The more he pleaded with men to respond to the gracious invitation of God, the more they seemed to respond. He continued preaching in this manner without considering that his preaching was contrary to his asserted theological position. That experience he recorded in the introduction to the Dialogues.

> In the year 1779, I found myself much stirred up to exhort my fellow creatures to repent, believe, and obey the Gospel,

---

[43] Ibid., 1775, p. 148; David Spencer, The Early Baptists of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: William Sykelmoore, 1877), p. 128.

> and began to adopt a more open and general method of preaching than I had used from some years before; having been deemed one of the most consistent Calvinists upon the continent, much upon the plan of Dr. Gill, whom I esteemed almost as an oracle. But now my heart being opened, and viewing the worth of souls, I felt great compassion towards them, and invited them with all my might to fly for mercy to the arms of Christ, who died for them, and who was willing to save them. I was gradually led into this way of preaching, without considering any thing about its consistency with strict calvinism, but finding myself very happy and comfortable in my own mind, and that this method of preaching was highly useful, I continued to go in the same course.[44]

The first encounter with universal restoration came in 1778, while Winchester was pastor at Welsh Neck. A friend gave him a copy of Paul Siegvolck's The Everlasting Gospel to read and explain to him.[45] In a cursory reading Winchester discovered that it was teaching the final end of sin and misery, and the restoration of all fallen creatures to a state of holiness and happiness. The rebellious would be restored after they had suffered limited punishment in proportion to their crimes. Several of Siegvolck's ideas struck him "such as the inconsistency and impossibility of both good and evil always existing in the universe; and especially his observations upon the word eternal or everlasting."[46] At this time he did not take it too seriously:

---

[44] Dialogues, 1792, pp. viii-ix.

[45] Siegvolck was the assumed name of Georg Klein-Nicolai, pastor at Friessdorf, Germany, who was deposed because of his advocacy of Universalism. He was one of a group of mystics and Anabaptists who denounced the state church as apostate because it had traded its piety for rigid orthodoxy. When the German mystics came to America they brought with them copies of Klein-Nicolai's Everlasting Gospel which had been published under his pseudonym. It was subsequently translated into English and published in 1753 by Christopher Sower. Sower had been influenced by the German mystics who fled to Wittgenstein to avoid persecution. Originally a member of the Reformed church, he left it and identified with the German Baptist Brethren. Sower may have believed in restorationism since it was his practice to print only those works with which he was in sympathy.

> But as I was only desired to tell what the author meant, when I had satisfied my friend in that respect, I laid the book down, and I believe, we both concluded it to be a pleasant ingenious hypothesis, but had no serious thoughts of its being true; and for my part, I determined not to trouble myself about it, or to think any thing more of the matter.[47]

He gave it no further thought until during one of his travels through Virginia he happened to mention the restoration to a fellow minister. The minister told him an interesting tale about an Episcopal clergyman who had adopted the universal restoration. The clergyman had preached about it on two Sundays and thereafter never preached again. He was stricken with illness which ended in death. This was seen as the judgment of God upon him for preaching the restoration.[48]

Some time later when he had returned to South Carolina, a physician from Virginia came to his parish bringing with him a copy of Siegvolck's book. Winchester read some more of the book but did not adopt its teachings. At that moment he "had not the least thought that ever I should embrace its sentiments"[49] It was not until two years later that he read the book again after experiencing some difficulty in obtaining a copy of it.

During the summer of 1779, Winchester had preached that those saved would equal, if not exceed, those lost. Some, he said, thought he would avow universal restoration then.[50] As he struggled with the recurring questions that had been raised by his reading, Winchester sought answers to the disturbing arguments. He wrote James Manning, the president of Rhode Island College, and asked him for the strongest argument in favor of endless punishment. Manning replied that "it was the nature of God to restrain sin in the most forceful manner," hence, he had willed endless punishment.[51] This response did not provide much help. Finding no satisfaction, his doubts continued to grow. To bolster his faith Winchester proceeded to preach sermons against the doctrine. Despite his efforts restoration grew on him:

---

[46] Ibid., p. iii. [47] Ibid., p. iv. [48] Ibid., pp. v-vi.

[49] Ibid., p. viii. [50] Dialogues, p. xi.

> Yet there was something in its favour that gained gradually upon my mind, and sometimes brought me to almost willing to embrace it. I plainly saw that it would reconcile almost, if not quite, all the difficulties of other systems; and I thought if I should ever receive it, I should be able to preach much easier, and more freely than ever, and with far greater satisfaction, which by experience, I have since found to be true. The ideas were sometimes so transporting to me, even while I professed to oppose the sentiment, that I have been constrained to set them forth in the most sublime manner that I was able; and sometimes so as actually to bring them who heard me converse upon the subject to believe and rejoice in the Universal Restoration, while I thought myself an opposer of it, and only proposed the arguments in its favour to see what effect they would have on such who never heard them before.[52]

When he was visiting his father in 1780, Winchester told him about restoration and indicated that he would not be surprised if in sixty years it was commonly accepted and preached throughout the country.

After his lengthy stay in New England from the fall of 1779 into the fall of 1780, Winchester started to return to Welsh Neck. On the way he stopped in Pawling's Precinct in New York state, where he engaged in extensive conversation with several people about universal restoration. In the course of the discussions no one was able to answer Winchester's arguments in favor of restoration.[53] Half converted to the doctrine of the restoration, Winchester arrived in Philadelphia, October 7, 1780, intending to stop for a few days, attend the Philadelphia Baptist Association annual meeting and go on to South Carolina. Instead he accepted the pulpit of the First Baptist Church for six months.

---

[51] *Ibid.*, p. xii.

[52] *Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii.

He had been in Philadelphia just a short time when he came into possession of the Restitution of All Things by George Stonehouse. The friends who loaned it to him were concerned that he wanted to read it. He discussed it with them and with some other people from his church. Friends told another minister about it and he came to set Winchester straight. When the minister saw Winchester he did not talk with him about it, but simply told him that if he adopted Universalism they would no longer be brothers.[54]

Soon others learned about Winchester's excursion into universal restoration. Many of his former friends encouraged him to abandon it, but upon his refusal abandoned him. One friend admonished him, "Mind what I tell you. In six months from this time, you will turn Deist, and deny all religion: and in twelve months you will turn Atheist, deny the being of God, and abandon yourself to all kinds of open wickedness."[55] He was deeply troubled not only about the doctrine but about the effects of his avowing it. In order to ascertain whether or not he really believed it he turned once again to examine it. The result of that examination was his unalterable conviction that restoration was right. Winchester related the experience this way:

---

[53] Ibid., p. xvii. [54] Ibid., p. xvii. [55] Ibid., p. vii.

> I now foresaw the storm, and I determined to prepare for it, not by denying what I had said, but by examining and determining for myself, whether the sentiment was according to Scripture or not. If I found that it was not, I was determined to retract, but if it was, to hold it fast, let the consequences be what they might. I had now no time to lose, I expected in a short time to be called to an account, and examined respecting this doctrine, and obliged either to defend or deny it. I was already too well persuaded that it was true, to do the latter without hesitation, and yet not sufficiently for the former. For this purpose, I shut myself up chiefly in my chamber, read the Scriptures, and prayed to God to lead me into all truth, and not suffer me to embrace any error; and I think that with an upright mind, I laid myself open to believe whatever the Lord had revealed. It would be too long to tell all the teachings I had on this head; let it suffice, in short, to say, That I became so persuaded of the truth of the Universal Restoration, that I was determined never to deny it, let it cost me ever so much, though all my numerous friends should forsake me, as I expected they would, and though I should be driven from men, and obliged to dwell in caves or dens of the earth, and feed on wild roots and vegetables, and suffer the loss of all things, friends, wealth, fame, health, character, and even life itself. The truth appeared to me more valuable than all things, and as I had found it, I was determined never to part with it, let what would be offered in exchange.[56]

As Winchester suspected the time was about to come when he would be called upon to defend or deny the doctrine. On January 22, 1781, the church met with him and requested him not to preach publicly or speak privately about the restoration. He agreed to remain silent unless asked to say something about it. However, that was not sufficient to halt the resistance that had developed to his ministry as a result of the suspicion of heresy. Subsequently the church met again in March to discuss publicly the question of the pastor's belief in restoration.

---

[56] Ibid., p. xvii-xviii.

Later that same month, the church invited a committee of ministers to meet with them and assist them in resolving the dispute. At that meeting Winchester admitted that he had become a restorationist, whereupon the ministers advised the church to dismiss him and call another pastor. After several more attempts to reconcile the division in the church, the church took the action recommended by the ministerial committee.[57]

Ezra Stiles remarked upon the disruption of the First Baptist Church in his diary entry of July 11, 1781.

> The Baptist Chh in Philad^{a} is rent in twain by a sore controversy. One Elhanan Winchester, a Baptist illiterate but talkative & self-conceited Elder of Rehoboth in Mass. Bay, has been preach^{g} in the Bapt. Chh in Philad^{a} the Doctrine of the final Universal Salv^{a} of Men & Devils. The 5th of last March the Congreg^{a} took up the matter, when it appeared that Winchester had rather a majority in his favor. Upon which sixty seven signed a Protest & renunciation against him & his principles. He avowed the Doctrine in the presence of the chh. & five Bapt. Ministers Apr. 3 1781. After attempt for healing, at length in a pub. Meet^{g} of the Chh. & Congreg^{a} agreeable to Advice of the Ministers these 67 Protesting Brethren & their adherents publickly separated themselves fr. Mr. Winchester & party & declared themselves the Baptist Chh in Philad^{a}, & renounced Elhanan Winchester. And on May 3d they procured another to preach to them--& afterwards resumed the possession of the Meet^{g} house, from w^{c} Winch. is excluded.[58]

Stiles was rightly concerned for what happened in Philadelphia was also happening in Massachusetts and Connecticut where Murrayan

---

[57] The complete story of the conflict is related in the following chapter.

[58] The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, pp. 547-548.

Universalists were undermining Baptist and Congregational churches alike.

During this year of turmoil Winchester married his fourth wife, a widow, Mary Morgan. The marriage like those which preceded it was filled with tragedy. Two children were still-born and Mary herself died after only a year and nine months as his wife.

At its annual meeting held in Philadelphia in October 1781, the Philadelphia Baptist Association took note of the conflict at the First Baptist Church. A committee consisting of the Reverends Samuel Jones, Oliver Hart, Abel Morgan, and James Manning was appointed to present a report with recommendations for the Association. The report indicated that the committee was convinced that the Protestors had done all they could in an attempt to be fair to the heretics. Second, that the ministers who had been called as a committee by the church had ruled properly. The third recommendation was that non-signers were to be excluded. Before they were excluded they were to be visited by two members of the church who would take the protest with them and give them the opportunity to sign. Should they refuse to sign they would be formally excommunicated. The Association resolved unanimously to accept the report and also to advise the churches to beware of Winchester and not to allow him to teach or to have any connection with their churches because of his advocacy of universal salvation.[59]

The Reverend Samuel Jones had been appointed to write the circular letter for the Association. The topic for that year was "God's

---

[59] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 174.

Covenant." Jones' purpose was to show the manner in which God works to redeem lost men through Jesus Christ. The letter took cognizance of Winchester's heresy by referring to the same scripture in Genesis which Winchester had used in his famous sermon The Seed of the Woman Bruising the Serpent's Head. Jones argued that this was not a covenant made with Adam. It was simply the discovery, revelation, and manifestation of God's will and purposes for the eternal life of man. Moreover, Jones insisted there were no conditions whatsoever which man was to meet. Only the rich grace and mercy of God in Christ could bring salvation. Among the scriptures which he cited were Romans 5:15-18 stressing the "free gift" of God; Ephesians 4:8 in which Paul says he "gave gifts unto men." The word "covenant" has a different meaning from a compact between man and God. It can mean a statute, an ordinance, or a decree. It is in this sense that covenant must be spoken of here because there can be no such thing as a covenant between God and man as far as spiritual blessings and service are concerned. Jones was careful to reaffirm the doctrine of particular election against the general salvation proposed by Winchester and other advocates of universal restoration.

> From the whole, then, we see, that there was a council held in eternity, even from everlasting, respecting the recovery of man; that the Triune God did then contrive, find out, adjust and settle, speaking after the manner of men, the whole plan and scheme of that great and glorious work, who should be saved, by what means, and after what manner; that the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, should be a Mediator, should undertake for his chosen ones as their surety, and should assume human nature, that he might make satisfaction to divine justice in their behalf; that all the gifts and graces necessary for the purpose should be treasured in him. That the blessed Spirit should cooperate in manifesting the whole to the world, and applying the same to the chosen ones, mainly, by enlightening their darkened understandings, working in them

> faith and repentance, changing their vile affections, converting them from the service of sin and Satan, to the service of the living God, carrying on the work of grace begun, and keeping them by the power of God, unto salvation; by every means making them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and finally bringing them to the full possession of it.[60]

According to the customary procedure, this circular letter was sent to all the churches in the Association and to the other Baptist Associations in the country. After reading the protest of the First Baptist Church against Winchester, the Warren Association

> resolved, that they do highly approve of the conduct of that Church therein; and we heartily unite with them in rejecting said doctrine, and from our fellowship, all those who avow the same.[61]

The circular letter of the Warren Association for 1781 mentioned Winchester and restoration.

> Neither was it imagined, a few years ago, that the conceit of the final restoration of all bad men and angels to endless happiness, could have been openly preached up with approbation. Yet Mr. Winchester has fallen into this latter error and delusion since our last meeting, to the grief of multitudes, and causing an open separation in our sister church, in the city of Philadelphia.[62]

Barred from preaching in the pulpit of the First Baptist Church Winchester made arrangements for the use of the hall at the University of Pennsylvania. There he and his followers continued until 1784, waiting for the court to rule on the appeal against the action of the First Baptist Church.

---

[60] _Ibid._, pp. 175-178.

[61] _Minutes of the Warren Association_, 1781.

[62] _Ibid._

5

Subsequently the verdict came down in favor of the First Baptist Church in July of 1784.

It was during his years as minister to his small group of followers that Winchester first met John Murray. Murray had come to this country in 1770 and preached in New York, Philadelphia, and New Jersey areas for several years. Around 1773 or 1774 Murray went to New England and preached in Gloucester regularly, finally establishing the first Universalist church there in 1779.

Murray spent the spring and early summer of 1784 in Pennsylvania, the Jerseys and New York. In 1784, Murray and Winchester met for the first time. Though they were in disagreement in some areas, they became friends immediately. Murray indicated that at the time he met Winchester he seemed quite feeble. He remarked,

> I have been edified by his remarks; and although I am not united with him, in sentiment, in every particular, yet we join issue in one glorious and fundamental truth, the final restoration of the whole posterity of Adam, and on this ground I hail him as my friend and brother. Our interview has been extremely affecting. He clasped me with such ardor to his bosom, and dropped such tears as friends are want to shed upon meeting each other, after a long and painful separation.[63]

Later when Winchester was endeavoring to build a meeting house for his Society of Universal Baptists, Murray encouraged his followers to donate to the project. Though in certain areas Murray and Winchester disagreed strongly, Murray was delighted to have a strong ally in the preaching of universal restoration.

---

[63] Abel C. Thomas, A Century of Universalism in Philadelphia and New York (Philadelphia: Published for whom it may concern, 1872), p. 342.

Throughout all of his life Winchester had great regard for his country and, in particular, for General George Washington. On December 29, 1783, he wrote a letter to Washington, in which he praised him as the general most highly honored by God. He praised him for his moderation in the use of power, for the skill with which he defeated the enemy, his ability in quieting the murmuring of the soldiers, and for his genuine humanity and generosity. Above all things Washington's belief in God gave Winchester cause for rejoicing.[64]

Winchester also wrote a short sketch of the life of George Washington, which is as full of praise as his letter:

> It is vain for me to attempt to do justice to his character; while true merit is esteemed, or virtue honoured, mankind will never cease to revere the memory of this hero; and, while gratitude remains in the human breast, the praises of Washington shall dwell on American tongues.
>
> He seems to me to possess in himself the united characters of Hero, Patriot, Warrior, Politician, Statesman, Legislator, Magistrate, and etc. and, in addition to these, to be the man of honor, sympathy, and sincere friendship; and, above all, he truly FEARS GOD, and is a SINCERE CHRISTIAN.[65]

By 1785, societies of Universal Restoration had been established in Boston, Providence, and other places in New England. On August 5, 1785, the Universal Societies met at Oxford and invited Murray and Winchester to speak at the meeting on September 14. At the convention they organized a council and elected Winchester moderator.[66] Winchester continued preaching regularly in Philadelphia until 1787 when he announced suddenly that he was leaving to go to England. Within a matter of forty-eight hours Winchester was on the ship heading for England where he arrived in September, 1787, leaving his congregation shocked at the suddenness with which he left his responsibilities in Philadelphia.

---

[64] Elhanan Winchester, Letter to George Washington, Philadelphia, December 9, 1783.

[65] Elhanan Winchester, Short Sketch of the Life and Character of General Washington (N.p., n.d.), p. 23.

Winchester's decision to go to England, however, came about through his acquaintance with Richard Clegg who had been a member of the Universalist Society in England. That Society reportedly began about 1778, and was attended by clergymen from the established churches and from the churches of the Dissenters. They met for private worship on the Lord's Day and as a part of their worship shared questions respecting various areas of theology. Among members of that group was the Reverend Richard Clarke who had left America some years before. It was Richard Clarke who published the English edition of Winchester's sermon The Outcasts Comforted. Through the publication of this sermon the Society learned of Winchester. When Richard Clegg went to Philadelphia he visited Winchester, was warmly received and preached for Winchester the first evening he was there. He remained in Philadelphia for about a year as a close friend of Winchester's. Near the end of his first year in Philadelphia Clegg died.

Armed with only a letter of introduction from the late Richard

---

[66] John Murray, Letters and Sketches of Sermons (Boston: Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812-13), I, 118-122.

Clegg to his brother John Clegg, a member of the Universalist Society in London, Winchester arrived in England on the twenty-ninth of September, 1787. Having few contacts in England, Winchester found great difficulty finding places to preach. Winchester first attempted to find opportunities to preach at two Baptist meeting houses--one in Blackfields where he preached on two occasions, and at Moorfields where he preached two or three times. Vidler reported that "these places were soon shut against him on account of his sentiments.[67]

As in America the Baptists in England were divided into Particular Baptists and General Baptists. The Baptist Annual Register indicated that in 1768 there were 217 Particular Baptist Churches and 69 General Baptists Churches. The Register does not give the number of General Baptist Churches for later years, but does indicate that by 1790 the Particular churches numbered 312, and by 1798, had reached 361.[68]

The Baptists in England were looked upon as queer people, were accused of all kinds of heresies and called by many demeaning names. David Benedict indicated that they adopted the Particular Baptist Confession of Faith in 1689 to clear themselves of false charges of heresy:

> As our brethren in this insulated kingdom are constantly loaded by their enemies with opprobrious epithets, both from the pulpit and the press, and were accused of holding many dangerous opinions, they at length put forth a confession of their faith for the purpose of clearing themselves from such

---

[67] William Vidler, op. cit., p. 46.

[68] John Rippon, The Baptist Annual Register (London: Sold by Dilly, Button, and Thomas), 1794 to 1797, p. 27; 1798 to 1801, p. 193.

unjust aspersions.[69]

The early part of the eighteenth century was a time of consolidation and organization for the Baptists. The Particular Baptists during that time had not made significant gains and the General Baptists apparently faired even worse. Although George Whitfield's revivals had a significant impact on Baptists in New England, they had considerably less impact on the churches of London.[70] By the end of the century Arianism had crept into some of the Particular churches and was wide spread among the General Baptists.[71]

The Particular and General Baptists divorced themselves from each other. The Particular Baptists were suspicious of the religion of the General Baptists. Whitley wrote:

> A suspicion of Socinianism, Arianism, and Unitarianism, hung round some churches for long, and every turning-point is an effort to assert the full deity of the Lord, and to part company with the ambiguous.[72]

Joshua Toulmin, who became an outstanding Unitarian leader in England, was the minister of the General Baptist Church in Taunton. It was among the General Baptist churches that Winchester had his opportunities for preaching during his stay in England.

The leading theologian of the English Baptists was a Particular

---

[69] David Benedict, op. cit., I, 199.

[70] William T. Whitley, A History of British Baptists (London: Charles Griffin and Company, Ltd., 1923), pp. 215-217; 228-229.

[71] William T. Whitley, The Baptists of London 1612-1928 (London: The Kingsgate Press, n.d.), p. 67.

[72] Ibid., p. 56.

Baptist, hyper-Calvinist, Dr. John Gill, who had been a minister for many years in London. His works were widely read and followed both in England and in America. It was this same Dr. Gill that Winchester had read and through whom he had developed a strong Calvinistic theology. During the latter half of the eighteenth century, the Rev. Dan Taylor, who succeeded Dr. Gill in London, organized a highly evangelistic association of Baptists from which most of the General Baptist churches were excluded because of doubts about their religion.

Because of the difficulties Winchester experienced in finding a place to preach among the Baptists, his friends provided him a chapel in Southwark. In 1788 he preached in Worship-Street in the morning and in Glass-house Yard in the evening. It was there that he gave his lectures on the prophecies. In addition to his regular preaching he continued itinerant preaching in London and surrounding areas. In December of 1788, Winchester wrote to his friend, Dr. Benjamin Rush in America, that though many had adopted the doctrine of Restoration, for one reason or another they were unwilling to openly declare their faith.[73]

Writing to Benjamin Rush, February 15, 1790, Winchester observed that he had many opportunities to preach among Baptists and Presbyterians, particularly in Kent County, where he preached in eighteen different places.[74] His preaching attracted considerable attention and caused many to be converted to the Restoration. It appears that his publications were a greater influence than his preaching for they reached into areas where he had not gone. Adam Aldridge, pastor of the General Baptist Church in Lyndhurst, wrote to Winchester and told him that he had studied Winchester's works on the Restoration and commended him for his outstanding leadership in teaching that doctrine.[75] Thomas Higgins, a former follower of Wesley's, asked Winchester for a copy of his Dialogues. He was willing to consider the doctrine of Restoration.[76]

---

[73] Edwin M. Stone, op-cit., p. 185. [74] Ibid., p. 185.

Winchester's following continued to grow so large that it was necessary to find a larger place to meet. After some investigation, Winchester settled on the Parliament Court Chapel. Joseph Wilson of Buxton Place, Lanbeth, wrote to Winchester about a possible meeting house that he had discovered. In replying to Wilson, Winchester said he had already leased the Parliament Court Chapel which seated about four or five hundred when filled. The meetings were well attended and most of the seats were taken, although he had been in the chapel less than six months.[77]

William Vidler enumerated the things which made Winchester popular. They were Winchester's extensive knowledge of scripture, his well-known piety, and his cheerful outlook.[78]

---

[75] Ibid., pp. 203-204. [76] Ibid., pp. 207-209.

[77] Elhanan Winchester, Letter to Joseph Wilson, Feb. 13, 1793.

[78] William Vidler, op. cit., p. 47.

Winchester had been disturbed by slavery in America. In England he took exception to the severity of the British penal code:

> A farthing taken on the highway, subjects a man to death, and yet though there are more public executions in England and Ireland, than in any kingdom in Europe, if not in all put together, yet crimes still multiply.[79]

Stone and Eddy wrote that Winchester was a close friend of John Wesley's and that as the result of their friendship Wesley became a believer in the doctrine of Restoration.[80] Wesley was supposed to have become a restorationist through several influences. While he was at Oxford, Wesley became a member and president of the Holy Club. Other members of the club included George Whitefield, Charles Wesley, James Hervey, and Sir George Stonehouse. Stonehouse was educated at Oxford where he was a member of the Holy Club. As the result of the debates and discussions in the Holy Club on the subject of universal restoration he published a book entitled Universal Restitution, a Scripture Doctrine, in 1761.[81]

A clergyman in the Church of England, Stonehouse was rector at Islington. Subsequently he left his charge at Islington and associated with the Moravians.

---

[79] Stone, op. cit., p. 189.

[80] Ibid., pp. 197-206; Richard Eddy, Universalism in America (Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1884), I, 12, 229.

[81] Although Eddy ascribes Universal Restitution to Sir George Stonehouse, it was published under the name of Sir James Stonhouse. Stonhouse was also a clergyman in the Church of England and a physician. See Dictionary of National Biography, LIV, 417-418. The Universalist Historical Society at Tufts University has a copy with Stonhouse listed as the author. The Philadelphia edition published in 1770 also lists Stonhouse.

It is clear from Wesley's Journal that George Stonehouse and Wesley were friends. Wesley mentioned visiting Stonehouse at Islington on a number of occasions. They dined together, conversed, and worshipped together in song and in prayer. On one occasion Stonehouse read a sermon for Wesley to comment on.[82] Of Stonehouse, Wesley wrote "He is all-original still, like no man in the world, either in sentiments or anything about him. But perhaps if I had his immense fortune I might be as great an oddity as he."[83] Writing in his Journal, August 8, 1773, Wesley referred to Stonehouse and one of his converts. "But," he said of the convert, "he is far more merciful than Mr. Stonehouse. He allows it to last (not five millions, but) only thirty thousand years!"[84] Wesley was alluding to the lengthy punishment that Stonehouse taught and the fact that his unnamed convert reduced it significantly.

In addition to his friendship with George Stonehouse, the fact that Wesley was responsible for the publication of the restorationist work of Charles Bonnet of Geneva, entitled Conjectures Concerning the Nature of Future Happiness, led many to believe that Wesley was a restorationist. In the Preface to the Dublin edition of 1787, Wesley wrote "I am happy in communicating to men of sense in this kingdom, and at a very low price, one of the most sensible tracts I ever saw."[85]

---

[82] Nehemiah Curnock (ed.), The Journal of Rev. John Wesley (London: Robert Culley, n.d.), I, 453-460; II, 94, 96-98, 115, 117, 118, 154, 267, 279, 345, 349, 350, 385, 394; III, 3; V, 42.

[83] Ibid., VI, 331.

[84] Ibid., V, 522-523.

A great deal is made of the reported friendship between Wesley and Winchester. The Journal shows that Wesley had read some of Winchester's works. The Journal entry for Friday, December 31, 1790, states, "Read Mr. Winchester!" Elizabeth Ritchie read to Wesley regularly. A note on Winchester says "E(lizabeth) R(itchie) read Mr. Winchester!"[86] The fact, however, that Wesley read Winchester does not prove that they were close friends. Moreover, if the text of Winchester's sermon on the death of John Wesley is to be taken seriously, we must assume that they were not close friends. In that sermon Winchester declared:

> I had but a very slight and small personal acquaintance with him, indeed the little I had could hardly be deemed any at all: I knew him by sight; I have heard him preach; he knew my name; and we have spoke together, as far as common salutation, once or twice, but not more.
>
> I never belonged to his society in my life, nor did I receive my religious impressions under his ministry, or that of any other preachers in his connection.
>
> I have never yet given his numberous writings a perusal, having only read some sermons, and other little tracts, some numbers of his Magazine, a few of his Journals, and part of his Appeal.[87]

It is more than likely that because Wesley preached frequently from an Arminian theological point of view that Christ died for all men the restorationists counted him as a believer of their doctrine. Benjamin Rush's letter to Winchester, commenting on Winchester's sermon on the death of Wesley, shows the usual thought process which the restorationists followed. Rush wrote, "if Christ died for all, as Mr. Wesley always taught, it will soon appear a necessary consequence that all shall be saved."[88]

---

[85] Stone, op. cit., p. 110. [86] Journal of John Wesley, VIII, 118.

[87] Elhanan Winchester, A funeral Sermon for the Rev. Mr. John Wesley (London: Printed for the author, 1791), p. 48.

Abruptly on May 1, 1794, without telling anyone, Winchester left England. Winchester left home in the morning and did not return. When he had not returned by the next morning, his wife spread an alarm for him and advertised in the newspapers that he was missing. None of his friends seemed to know what had happened to him until a Mr. H. W. Mortimer received a letter from Winchester dated May 1, 1794. In that letter Winchester revealed that he left England because of his unhappiness with his wife and her frequent rages with him. Mortimer brought the letter and read it aloud in the presence of Mrs. Winchester and other friends who had gathered in Winchester's home:

> Your sorrow cannot be greater in reading this mournful epistle, than mine is in writing it. I hardly know whether I can disclose, even to you, the real cause of my absence, as I never before mentioned my case to any person, hoping forever to have concealed it. Here perhaps you stand astonished, as well you may, when I tell you that I have been driven from my own house, by the hands of my wife, and have hardly escaped with my life, being much bruised, and my face much swelled by the blows which I have received: but as I have escaped I return humble thanks to God who gave me my existence: in him I have put my trust for many years, and in him I confide, not withstanding the darkness which at present surrounds me. My poor unhappy wife! (For I can now speak freely of her) is of the most violent temper by far of any person that I ever saw, or I think ever read of, even in fiction. I knew something of this before I married her; but thinking I could certainly conduct myself in such a manner as to make her happy, and

---

[88] "Letter to Elhanan Winchester, November 12, 1791," in L. H. Butterfield (ed.), Letters of Benjamin Rush (Princeton: Published for American Philosophical Society by Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 611.

> determining to bear everything patiently, I ventured to engage in the fatal bond. In a few weeks she began to exert her authority, to which I too imprudently gave way; but if I had not so done I must have left my house, and what would have grieved me much more, I must have left my sphere of usefulness. Often have I borne the bitterest taunts, mockings, cursings, and the most horrid imprecations, yea, and the most violent blows for the smallest trifles, even when no offense has been intended; while I have fallen on my knees, wept, prayed, spoke kindly, and asked pardon, as though I had committed the greatest fault.[89]

In a subsequent letter to Mortimer, dated May 5, 1794, Winchester said that his wife was the only person he ever allowed to stand in the way of his service to God. Winchester reflected that after the death of his fourth wife his friends had urged him not to marry again, but to dedicate himself entirely to the service of God. Winchester had argued that ministers needed to be married to avoid reproach. In 1784 he married another widow, Maria Knowles. Because of his insistence God allowed him to enter into "a state of bondage indeed." Of that state of bondage, Winchester wrote, "So I have endured a servitude for nine years and a half."[90] Winchester wrote another letter to Mortimer which concluded with these lines "Dear Sir, excuse me, but in parting with her I have cut off the right hand, and chopped out the right eye."[91]

Winchester set sail from England in late May, arriving in Boston, July 12, 1794. The congregation in London was surprised at his leaving and sent a letter signed by several hundred persons requesting him to return to England. Some of his friends in England tried to arrange passage for Mrs. Winchester to America, hoping that if she were to come to America, Winchester would return to England. It was not until March 15, 1795, that Mrs. Winchester landed in America. There she successfully persuaded Winchester to spend the remainder of his days with her.

---

[89] "Letter to H. W. Mortimer, May 1, 1794," in William Vidler, op. cit., pp. 55-54.

[90] "Letter to H. W. Mortimer, May 5, 1794," Ibid., pp. 63, 66.

[91] "Letter to H. W. Mortimer, n.d.," Ibid., p. 86.

When Winchester first returned to America, he preached throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut. During that time he wrote his Defense of Divine Revelation against Tom Paine's Age of Reason. In September 1794, Winchester served as moderator of the New England Convention held at Oxford. In the course of the sermon he was delivering to the convention, Winchester began talking about ordination. Occupying the pulpit with him was young Hosea Ballou. Winchester called Ballou over to him and ordained him on the spot.[92]

Winchester preached in New England and in New York and returned to Philadelphia in the summer of 1795. Once more large congregations gathered to hear him. That same year he published A Plain Political Catechism in which he expressed his understanding of society and government in terms of the social compact theory:

> Society is a natural or voluntary combination of individuals together, to comfort, assist, strengthen and support each other. Hence the necessity of a state of society originates in the wants and weaknesses of men, who can scarcely exist singly, but united can perform great things, and enjoy

---

[92] Thomas Whittemore, Life of Rev. Hosea Ballou (Boston: James M. Usher, 1854), I, 106.

> affluence, and all means of happiness. N.B. Natural society is that into which we are born, as into families, which families belong to communities and etc., but voluntary society is that into which persons enter by their own choice, as into the state of marriage, connexion with societies, or voluntary associations of any kind.[93]

He insisted that government is necessary because of the vices of society. In creating that society individuals find it necessary to give up some of their rights. They cannot, however, be expected to sacrifice their unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The function of government is to protect life, liberty and property.[94]

All men are equal before the law which is responsible to protect all and to punish all. Liberty, he defined, as "the freedom that every man ought to have, to think, speak, write, and do what he pleases, so that he does not encroach on the liberty of others, or in any wise injure the community."[95]

Winchester believed that "the genuine love of liberty is, next to benevolence, or the love of God and man, the noblest motive that ever influenced the human mind."[96]

Though government is necessary, Winchester did not want it to exercise too much governing power. If government is to have integrity it must be based on the basic principles of religion. These were the belief in a supreme being who is the creator and ruler of the universe, the belief that a supreme being pays attention to the words and actions of men, the belief that the supreme being loves truth and detests falsehood, and that there is a state of reward or punishment for truth or falsehood. "Unless a person believes all these principles, his oath is not of the smallest validity."[97]

---

[93] Elhanan Winchester, A Plain Political Catechism (Greenfield, Mass.: From the Press of T. Dickman, 1796), pp. 6-7.

[94] *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9. [95] *Ibid.*, p. 13. [96] *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

Though insisting on the necessity of the basic principles of religion he added that no religious test should be required of anyone in order to share in the protection of the government. In his Oration on the Discovery of America, Winchester called America "The very birthplace of civil and religious liberty."[98]

The famous Unitarian preacher and scientist, Rev. Joseph Priestley, came to America in 1793. He experienced great difficulty in finding a place to preach because of his doctrine. After Winchester came to America in 1794, he allowed Priestley the opportunity to preach in his new meeting house. The Unitarians occupied it in the morning with Winchester assisting in the services, and then preaching in the afternoons and evenings himself.

During his associations with Winchester, Priestley became convinced of the doctrine of universal restoration. In the course of his lectures, entitled Discourses Relating to the Evidences of Revealed Religion, delivered at the church of the Universalists in 1796, Priestley publicly expressed his faith in the doctrine of universal restoration.[99] In the first volume of the Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion, 1772, Priestley had affirmed his belief in the annihilation of the wicked.[100] Unitarianism Explained and Defended is concluded with a confession of faith in Universalism.[101] The friendship between Priestley and Winchester is significant for the relations of Unitarian-Universalism in the United States and the wedding in the twentieth century.

---

[97] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

[98] Elhanan Winchester, An Oration on the Discovery of America (London: Printed for the author, by Keeble and Acutts, 1792), p. 26.

Late in 1796, Winchester went to New York and became a friend of Governor John Jay. The same year, he bought a small farm in Hartford, Connecticut. Winchester and his wife remained there until his death in April 1797. His last sermon was preached in Hartford, April 1797, on the theme of St. Paul's farewell to the Ephesian churches.[102]

Winchester died on April 18, and was buried on April 21, 1797. At the Center Presbyterian Church the Rev. Nathan Strong preached a sermon on the occasion of his funeral on the text, "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment."[103] Rev. Thomas Jones who had become a Universalist under the ministry of Elhanan Winchester in 1788, came to Philadelphia in 1796 and assumed the pastorate of the Lombard Street Church upon the retirement of Elhanan Winchester. He remained there as pastor until 1804. On May 7, 1797, he preached a funeral sermon for Winchester. In England, William Vidler preached a memorial sermon in the Parliament Court Chapel on June 18.

---

[99] Joseph Priestley, Discourses Relating to the Evidences of Revealed Religion (Philadelphia: Printed by John Thompson, 1769), pp. 422-423.

[100] Joseph Priestley, Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works, II, 64.

[101] Joseph Priestley, Unitarianism Explained and Defended, 1796, in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works, XVI, 487.

[102] Acts 20:28-35.

[103] Hebrews 9:27.

CHAPTER III

THE UNIVERSAL RESTORATION CONTROVERSY

We have pointed out that the Baptists had become revivalistic while remaining strict Calvinists. Their confession of faith was used to bind the church together in fellowship and to prevent deviation. Let us now look at what happened when the most successful preacher in their denomination adopted the doctrine of universal restoration. We will indicate the main tenets of his theology and describe his particular view of the doctrine of the salvation of all men which he called "universal restoration." It will be apparent that Winchester was not a philosophical theologian. He was first and foremost a preacher concerned to reach as many people as he could with the good news of the gospel which included salvation for all men. A dull sameness appears throughout his writing. He is significant less for his intellectual contribution than for his leadership in spreading the universal doctrine. It was because of his strong biblical emphasis and his persuasive powers as a preacher that Winchester's espousal of restoration at First Baptist Church created great concern and resulted in his suspension and excommunication.

When it became impossible to continue in the Baptist ministry, Winchester started his own society composed of Baptists who believed in universal restoration. Preachers of universal salvation were roundly accused of opening the way to licentiousness. Winchester saw his doctrine as the most powerful opponent to the growing infidelity.

Winchester's Orthodoxy

Although Winchester adopted the doctrine of the restoration of all things with its consequent effect on his doctrine of the atonement, nevertheless, in other particulars, he remained as orthodox as his former Baptist friends. Winchester continued throughout the remainder of his life to preach the doctrines of revelation, the trinity, the divinity of Christ, the substitutionary atonement, the importance and necessity of the resurrection, and the second coming in which Christ would finally overcome the world.

Hosea Ballou, II, complained that though he was the most learned of the early Universalists, Winchester carried future punishment too far and was too literal in his interpretation of the scripture. "We make allowance, of course," he said, "for the other Orthodox elements which he held in common with his brethren at that time."[1]

With the orthodox of his day, Winchester believed in the necessity of revelation. To reject revelation would inevitably lead to rationalism and infidelity. In A Plain Political Catechism, Winchester asked the question, "Who are infidels?" His reply pointed out that a man should be considered an infidel not because he deviated in some understanding of commonly held doctrine, but because he rejected divine scriptures. The infidel is the man who treats the scriptures with contempt. In denying the truths of the scriptures the infidel often accepts other truths with far less authentic evidence to support them.[2]

---

[1] Hosea Ballou, II, "Rev. Hosea Ballou: His parentage and Early Years," in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review (Boston: Published by A. Tompkins, 1854), pp. 187-188.

Winchester had imbibed the spirit of the enlightenment to the extent that he knew the importance of the use of reason in understanding revelation. It was, however, an important principle with him never to allow reason to take the place of revelation.[3]

Tom Paine had insisted that the only way one could believe in divine revelation was to have it communicated to him directly. Winchester insisted that there were two methods of revelation. One was immediate revelation. The other was revelation granted to a few which was to be divulged to the many.[4]

Revelation given to the few can be as certain as that which is received immediately from God, if the people to whom it was first revealed are able to give satisfactory proof that they have received a genuine revelation. If man had no way of handing down authentic facts from one generation to another, his condition would be sad indeed. Winchester argued that what Paine called heresay-revelation was really the more preferable method.[5]

---

[2] A Plain Political Catechism, pp. 77-78.

[3] Dialogues, 1799, p. 25.

[4] Elhanan Winchester, Ten Letters Addressed to Mr. Paine (Boston: Printed and Sold by John W. Folsom, 1794), pp. 69-70.

Direct confrontation by God would strike terror in man, he said. In the second method of revelation, whatever is given out as revelation must carry its own evidence that it came from God. It must be something that only God could make known or something that was confirmed by miracles. The confirmation of scripture revelation is made known in the fulfillment of prophecies, such as the prophecies about Jesus being born in Bethlehem.[6]

The Bible is without essential error, Winchester declared. It is impossible that at any time the scriptures should have been added to, suppressed, or altered in any significant way without that alteration being immediately detected. He concluded:

> The Bible is therefore, the written existing word of God, in which we cannot be deceived; it proclaimeth his power, it publisheth his wisdom, it manifests his goodness and beneficence. And it teaches us to imitate the moral goodness and beneficence of God towards all his creatures; it forbids revenge, wrath, envy and malice,between man and man; and teaches us to love one another, and to do good to all, even our enemies, and to be kind, even to useful beasts. It gives us the highest proofs and hopes of immortality that we could even wish for. And thus in every respect, it bears evident marks of its divine original.[7]

In his interpretation of the scriptures, Winchester endeavored as much as possible to use the literal method. A spiritual interpretacould be added to the literal one if necessary. If it was impossible to ascertain the meaning of the passage by the literal method, it was permissible to use the figurative sense.[8]

---

[5] Ibid., pp. 60-61, 68. [6] Ibid., pp. 70, 80-82.

[7] Ibid., pp. 124-125.

Armed with belief in the doctrine of revelation and the literal principle of scripture interpretation, Winchester affirmed the doctrine of the trinity—one true God made known as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.[9]

In the Divinity of Christ Proved From the Scriptures, Winchester compared scripture passages in the Old Testament with those in the New Testament, endeavoring to point out that similar titles were given to both Jehovah and Jesus. From this he concluded that God and Christ were one. The more he searched the scriptures the more he was led to believe that Christ was God manifest in the flesh.[10]

Jesus was both God and man in two natures. As God he was equal with God. As man he was inferior to God. As the incarnate Christ there will be an end to his kingdom. As the incarnate Christ he is subject to the Father. But as the Son of God he is equal with the Father and in that sense the angelic proclamation to Mary[11] that his kingdom should have no end is unalterably true.[12]

In speaking of himself, Jesus claimed equality with the Father while at the same time viewing himself as a messenger of the Father. Moreover, the miracles of Jesus prove his divinity.

---

[8] Elhanan Winchester, A Course of Lectures, on the Prophecies That Remain To Be Fulfilled, in The Philadelphian Magazine (N.p.: Printed for the Philadelphian Society, 1788), pp. 38-39.

[9] Elhanan Winchester, Works and Words of Jesus (London: Printed for the Philadelphian Society, 1788) pp. 12-15.

[10] Elhanan Winchester, The Divinity of Christ Proved From the Scriptures (Philadelphia: Benjamin Towne, 1784), p. 11.

[11] Luke 1:33.

[12] The Divinity of Christ Proved, p. 13.

Winchester concluded, "I can think of nothing plainer from the New Testament than the DIVINITY OF CHRIST."[13] A few pages later he said he was perfectly satisfied that Christ is truly divine and properly God and that it was this which warmed his hope and confidence. Winchester liked to use poetry to express his thoughts:

> Some take HIM a creature to be,
> A man or an Angel at most;
> Sure those have not feelings like me,
> Nor know themselves wretched and lost;
> So guilty, so helpless am I,
> I durst not confide in HIS blood,
> Nor on HIS protection rely,
> Unless I was sure HE IS GOD.[14]

The Arians, he said, pay homage to Christ but not as God. They believe that the doctrine of the trinity is absurd. For them, Christ is but a man. Winchester asked, "If he be not divine, as well as human, how could he make atonement and reconciliation for us, any more than any other martyr?"[15]

Because man is fallen and cannot be justified by his own works, he must be reconciled to God through the death of Christ on his behalf. Only Christ had the power and the ability to make reconciliation between God and man. The doctrine of atonement or salvation through the crucified saviour is a stumbling block and foolishness to those who do not believe. Christ crucified is the great object of the Apostles' preaching. With the doctrine of the atonement stands or falls the distinct personality of Christ.

---

[13] Ibid., p. 19.

[14] Ibid., p. 25.

[15] Elhanan Winchester, The Preaching of the Atonement Foolishness (London: Printed for the author by a company of gentlemen, 1792), p. 29.

Those who deny the real divinity of Christ also deny the reality of the atonement.[16] Christ died to deliver man from iniquity and to purify him from sin, yet it is still necessary as the messages of God have always pointed out, that man should repent of his sin and be born again.[17]

In response to Tom Paine, Winchester argued that if the resurrection of Jesus could be proved then the scriptures would be true and Christ would be accepted as the Saviour of the world. In ascertaining the truth of any fact of history four marks are apparent, Winchester said. The first is that the senses are able to judge the truth of the things which were said or done. The second mark is the necessity of confident witnesses. Third, that histories be written and institutions set up in remembrance of those facts. Fourth that such institutions begin at the time the event took place. Since the resurrection has the four necessary historical marks, it must be accepted as true.[18] Nevertheless the doctrine of the resurrection is denied and evaded. Apart from the doctrine of the resurrection there is no good news. If the doctrine of the resurrection is overthrown, the whole gospel falls with it.[19] "The doctrine of the Resurrection is a truth of very great importance, and without it Christianity would be no more than a fable."[20]

---

[16] Ibid., pp. 11, 33. [17] Works and Words of Jesus, pp. 48-52.

[18] Ten Letters to Paine, pp. 17-18.

[19] Elhanan Winchester, Comfort for Mourning Christians (London: Printed by R. Hawes, n.d.), pp. 5-10.

In Children Exhorted, Winchester urged his hearers to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour and as Creator. He reminded them of Christ's condescension in leaving his heavenly courts to live in the human world as the incarnate Son of God. The Saviour who died is the one who lives again, who ascended on high, making intercession, and will come again to receive them into the presence of God. If one would read the New Testament with an open mind it would be impossible for him not to understand that the second coming of Christ is the great expectation of man and it is that which provides joy and hope to the believers in Christ.[21] Winchester taught that Jesus would come again to reign on earth for a thousand years and at that time raise up from the dead those who had been believers in him and make them partakers of his kingdom.[22]

The Doctrine of Universal Restoration

When Winchester arrived in Philadelphia, he was in the midst of an intellectual and emotional conflict over the growing realization of the truth of universal salvation. Consciously he tried to dismiss the doctrine from his mind. Try as he might, the many arguments he had advanced in favor of restoration during his discussions were so convincing to him as to render him helpless in the attempt.

---

[20] Elhanan Winchester, The Restitution of All Things Defended (London: Printed for the author, 1790), p. 41.

[21] Comfort for Mourning Christians, p. 16.

[22] Elhanan Winchester, Children Exhorted to Remember Their Creators (London: Printed by T. Gillet, 1793), pp. 10, 28.

It was impossible for anyone to continue in such conflict of heart and mind without inevitably being forced to resolve it. Diligent application in study and prayer led him to affirm the truth of universal restoration and to determine never to deviate from it regardless of circumstances that might arise.

Those circumstances were not long in coming. Some of his congregation with whom he had discussed restoration and others who had heard of his discussions met with him on the evening of January 22, 1781, to question him concerning his belief in universal salvation. He was cautioned not to preach or teach it though he held it in private. Despite the admonition Winchester was frequently asked to discuss it. At a subsequent meeting the opposition group sought to dismiss him because of his views.

Once the subject had been brought out into the open, Winchester felt it was necessary to make clear the precious truth he had discovered. On April 22, 1781, Winchester delivered the first of his sermons on the restoration. The sermon, based on Genesis 3:15, was entitled The Seed of the Woman Bruising the Serpent's Head. In that sermon Winchester taught the benevolence of God, the finitude of sin, and that as in Adam man received his fallen nature, so in Christ man receives the divine nature.

Winchester can hardly be accused of being a creative or independent thinker. Much of what he wrote in The Seed of the Woman was taken from Paul Siegvolck's Everlasting Gospel. Ideas are simply rephrased by Winchester. Siegvolck taught that the nature of God is love. All the works of God are love and any works that are not works of love do not spring from God, but from Satan. All creatures are products of God's love and he intends only good for them.[23] Winchester said, "God is love, essentially and communicatively."[24] He added that in a God of infinite love there is no place for fury, wrath, or anger. These are the characteristics of fallen nature apart from God. God is always working for the good of his creatures. The good that God wills is intended for fallen men and angels. There is no evidence that Winchester was directly influenced by reading works of the leaders of the Enlightenment, even though the benevolence of the deity was one of their principal tenets.

The interpretation of the fall of angels and men is a most interesting part of the sermon. God created angels as finite creatures with freedom of will. They were intended to be reflections of God's life, light and love. However, Lucifer and his host fell prey to their own desires and awakened wrath in nature, falling into darkness and disorder. Siegvolck insisted that the diabolical form of fallen angels which made them devils be distinguished from their angelic nature in motion.[25] Using this device, Winchester attempted to account for the earth being without form and void, with darkness covering the deep. Good and Evil were struggling with each other. God joined Good and stopped the progress of Evil. The scripture expresses this by saying God "brooded over the face of the deep," bringing order out of chaos.[26]

---

[23] Paul Siegvolck, The Everlasting Gospel, translated into English by John Sechla (Germantown: Printed by Christopher Sower, 1753), pp. 1-2.

[24] Elhanan **Winchester**, The Seed of the Woman Bruising the Serpent's Head (Philadelphia: Printed by request, 1781), p. 17.

Adam was created in the divine image having the whole human nature undivided in him, both male and female. Adam was formed from the first three principles,

> the Fire, which is the Root of all Life, the Water, or Meekness necessary to qualify it, and the Principle called the third, viz. of this outward World, or Nature; which it was necessary should be in him, in order that he might rule over the whole lower Creation.[27]

Adam's sin sprang from his desire to know good and evil which produced a lusting after the world and stirred up wrath. After eating of the tree of death Adam fell asleep. So that Adam might not be alone, God separated the female part from him making woman. The new partners could not resist the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. When they had eaten the fruit their eyes were opened and the life of the world rose up in them extinguishing the divine life.

> Their Souls lost the Perfection of Christ, the divine Righteousness, the white Garment; and were shut up in Selfishness, Envy, Pride and Wrath; and their Bodies no longer luminous, became gross, dark, and beastial, filled with all Kinds of Lusts, and vicious Appetites: They were now fallen home to the World, had lost all Dominion over the Creatures and Elements, and had the Mortification to find themselves Slaves, where before they had been Lords.[28]

---

[25] Siegvolck, op. cit., p. 16.

[26] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[27] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

[28] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

Adam and Eve became like the fallen angels, who had lost paradise and had no power to regain it. Then God came in the cool of the day reproving the serpent saying, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.[29] It was as though God were saying to the serpent you have planted your seed, now I will plant mine, and it shall eventually overpower and destroy your seed. From that very moment God's seed began to work.

> God no sooner promised the Seed of the Woman as a Bruiser of the Serpent, to the Parents of Mankind, but it was planted in their Breasts, as a Spark of divine Life: from which Moment Christ's Incarnation, and Man's Redemption was begun.[30]

However, the divine seed is only the possibility of restoration. Just as seed planted in the ground needs watering and sun to make it grow, so the seed hidden in the soul of man needs the superintending of the grace of God. It is Christ who raises the seed in man. The source of this part of Winchester's sermon is difficult to trace. It is not found in The Everlasting Gospel.

At this point Winchester revealed the influence of natural religion in his theology when he said, "Here we see there is nothing arbitrary; all is natural throughout the whole Process; nothing can rise up but according to the Possibilities of Nature."[31]

In his fallen nature man lost the divine life and replaced it with the life of the world which is envy, pride, selfishness, and wrath.

---

[29] Genesis 3:15.

[30] Seed of the Woman, pp. 7-8.

[31] Ibid., p. 9.

God wills that man should be saved from his fallenness. If an arbitrary act of God could have effected man's salvation God could have acted that way. Only the shed blood of Christ is able to destroy the evil fallen nature. This Winchester terms the "process of Christ." That process is two-fold: to destroy the life of flesh and blood which cannot enter the kingdom of God, and to raise up in man the divine image which enables him to enter the kingdom. In fulfilling the first part of the process it was necessary for Christ to go through all the stages of life, from his birth to his death, becoming truly man. As man had received Adam's nature he could now receive Christ's. Through the process Christ finally destroyed the power of death, overcoming all evil in nature during his life, passing through death into a world of paradise which man would share with him.[32]

As the serpent's head is found in every man, so it must be bruised in every man to fulfill the scriptures. Moreover, God has promised to bring all creatures to divine allegiance leaving none opposed to his will in eternity. As long as rebellion lasts, misery will last. But, Winchester insisted, rebellion will not last to all eternity, so neither will misery. All things will be reconciled to God again by the blood of Christ. Even sin and death shall be destroyed.

The sermon is concluded with five principles upon which the doctrine of restoration is based.[33]

> 1. God is Love, essentially, and communicatively, and loves all the Beings he hath made, considered as his Creatures and is constantly seeking to do them Good.

---

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

2. God's Design in creating intelligent Beings, was to make them happy in the Knowledge and Love of his Glorious Perfections.
3. God's absolute ultimate Designs cannot be eternally frustrated.
4. Christ died for all; and died not in vain.
5. Christ came to destroy the evil Principle, or Sin out of the Universe, which he will finally effect; and then Misery shall be no more.

Shortly after preaching his sermon on the Seed of the Woman, Winchester got hold of a copy of Chevalier Ramsay's Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion. After studying at Edinburgh, Ramsay traveled on the continent where he met the theological mystic Pierre Poiret whose impact on him caused him to change his own views. Ramsay became a very close friend of Francis Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, through whom he was encouraged to join the Catholic church. Fenelon too had been influenced by the mystics. In his work The Maxims of the Saints, he espoused the cause of Madame Guyon and her doctrine of Quietism. Thereafter he was denounced by Bossuet who had consecrated him bishop in 1695, his book was censured by the Pope, and he was forced to recant. Perhaps to prove his devotion he assisted the Jesuits in their attack on the Jansenists. Ramsay had read Leibnitz, Descartes, Locke, Spinoza, Malebranche, Newton and others of the Enlightenment leaders.

Ramsay argued that there were two ways to arrive at truth. It could be discovered through natural evidence and through supernatural revelation, both of which were part of the same wisdom. However, although natural evidence is not always sufficient to discover supernatural truth, revelation never contradicts reason. Revealed religion conforms to natural religion. Winchester found he could agree entirely with Ramsay. It was through Ramsay that the Enlightenment came directly to Winchester. It must also be pointed out that much of what Ramsay wrote was already expressed by Winchester in that first sermon on universal restoration.

Later that same year Winchester wrote The Mystics Plea for Universal Redemption. It was written in answer to a pamphlet published by the First Baptist Church and written by Rev. William Rogers and several other leaders of the opposition. That pamphlet, An Address from the Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, to their Sister Churches, presented the conflict from the church's viewpoint. The key scripture which Winchester used was Acts 3:21, "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." In addition he quoted Matthew 17:11, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things," and Matthew 18:11, "for the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." Winchester argues from these scriptures that the fallen angels and the damned in hell were lost, therefore, they shall be saved. If the Son of man came to save the lost, and if fallen angels and the damned in hell are lost, then the Son of man came to save the fallen angels and damned in hell. If Christ will have all men to be saved the damned cannot be punished in hell eternally. Speaking of hell he recalled St. Paul's teaching "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."[34]

In contrast to his Baptist brethren who believed in endless punishment of the wicked, Winchester taught a limited punishment based on divine love. God loves all men, he said, and none can perish. But because he loves God punishes. Punishment is intended to bring about a purging from sin. The chastening of the sinner proves God's great love for him.

---

[34] Romans 5:20.

> The pure, mere Love of God is that alone by which Sinners are justly to expect from God, that no Sin will pass unpunished, but that his Love will visit them with ever Calamity and distress, that can help to break and purify the bestial Heart of Man, and awaken in him true Repentance and Conversion to God. It is Love alone in the holy Deity, that will allow no Peace to the Wicked, nor ease its Judgments, till every Sinner is forced to confess, That it is good for him that he has been in Trouble; and thankfully own, That not the Wrath, but the Love of God, has plucked out that right Eye, cut off that right Hand, which he ought to have done, but would not do for himself.[35]

The belief in limited punishment and punishment leading to reformation of character came from Siegvolck and Ramsay. Siegvolck affirmed that all punishment was aimed not at merely punishing men, but was intended for

> their final Preservation, Melioration and Restoration, let them last as long as they will: because the deepest Ground of all Punishments of God determined for the Creatures, so far as they are his Doings, is his infinite and unchangeable Love, and it is impossible that Love should for ever and without End plague and torment that which it loves, but by all Pains and Torments seeks and can seek nothing else but the Amendment of its beloved Object. For Love thinketh no Evil; much less does Evil, or designs to do it. I Cor. 13:5.[36]

Moreover, he taught that wrath and punishment are intended to purge and soften the disobedient until they acknowledge God.[37] Ramsay indicated that physical evil is the only means of curing moral evil. By pain and punishment men will be purified, subdued, and transformed.[38]

---

[35] Elhanan Winchester, The Mystic's Plea for Universal Redemption (Philadelphia, 1781), p. 9.

[36] Siegvolck, op. cit., p. 4.

[37] Ibid., p. 5.

In The Restitution of All Things Defended, written in response to the tracts by the English Particular Baptist Dan Taylor on The Eternity of Future Punishment Asserted and Improved, and Endless Misery Asserted and Re-asserted, Winchester referred to Jesus' use of the symbol of the furnace. The furnace is designed to melt and purify metals placed in it. Limited punishment is intended to fulfill the same function.[39] Winchester considered the punishment but a short time when compared to the mercy of God.[40]

He illustrated his belief that future punishment leads to repentance with a story about a soldier who was flogged. The soldier was angry when the beating began, but by the time he had received half his punishment realized that the punishment was just. His rage left him entirely. Winchester concluded that though a certain amount of punishment will cause a man to become angry and harden his heart, additional punishment will make him penitent.[41]

The harshness of the punishment Winchester preached caused other Universalists to cringe. John Murray, the most famous of the early Universalist preachers agreed with Winchester on the doctrines of the trinity, total depravity, vicarious atonement, and imputed righteousness, rejected his notion of future punishment, insisting that man was punished in this life for his sin. Hosea Ballou, 2d, called the purgatory doctrine "salvation by works," claiming that according to Winchester's doctrine man eventually entered into salvation through his own suffering.[42]

---

[38] Andrew Michael Ramsay, The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion (Glasgow: Printed and sold by Robert Foulis, 1748-49), I, 366; II, 371.

[39] Elhanan Winchester, The Holy Conversation and High Expectations of Christians (London: Printed and Sold by R. Hawes, n.d.) pp. 46-47.

[40] Lectures on the Prophecies, p. 13.

[41] Dialogues, 1799, p. 163.

Another essential part of Winchester's brand of restorationism was the teaching that sin is finite. This too came from Siegvolck and Ramsay. Siegvolck insisted that "Sin, therefor, consists in nothing else but in mere Disorder and Abuse."[43] Through the exercise of free will angels and men can abuse the nature God gave them in creation but they cannot destroy it. The idea of sin as disorder is expressed by Ramsay as the separation of the love of order from the love of pleasure.[44] Sin, according to Winchester, was a part of the fallen nature of man. Salvation consists in being completely rid of sin. It is only a false hope that God will save apart from man's suffering for his sin.[45]

As sin was natural so was punishment. Punishment was not a state imposed from without, "but is the inborn, natural, essential State of our own disordered Nature."[46] Man will have a birth of righteousness not, therefore, because of an arbitrary act of love to elect some, but because it is part of the nature of God that all men should be saved while at the same being punished for their sins. Ramsay said that God desires necessarily the supreme happiness of all finite intelligences and uses all the means necessary to lead them to their ultimate goal.[47] That included punishment for sin.

---

[42] Hosea Ballou, 2d, "The Dogmatic and Religious History of Universalism in America," in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, V, 98.

[43] Siegvolck, op. cit., p. 16.

[44] Ramsay, op. cit., I, 330.

[45] The Mystic's Plea, p. 9.

[46] Ibid., p. 10.

The atonement of Christ was not just for the elect as the Calvinists taught and as he had preached for some years. Christ died "sufficiently and intentially" for all men.[48] The sufficiency of Christ's death is revealed in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Calvinists argued that in this passage "world" means "elect." But, Winchester said, to substitute "elect" for "world" would indicate that some of the elect would perish. It would be the same as saying that God so loved the elect that any of the elect who believed in him would be saved. Then any of the elect that did not believe in him would be lost. The passage teaches, Winchester said, that whoever among the sons of fallen Adam should believe would be saved. This was God's intent. The purpose of Christ was not to condemn the world but to save it.

If this latter statement is true, Winchester believed there were four possible conclusions that could be drawn: "The Saviour of all Men, first, is either willing to save all Men, but not able; or, secondly he is able, but not willing; or thirdly, he is neither willing nor able; or else, lastly, he is both able and willing." The only conclusion possible is that God is both able and willing.[49] The eighteenth century concern with the question of evil is reflected here. Certainly Winchester's conclusion that God is both willing and able to save all men could have been derived from Ramsay who insisted that since God's design in the creation of man was to insure his ultimate happiness he would not in his wisdom have created those he was not able to convert. Moreover, finite creatures do not have the power to resist infinite power.[50] Siegvolck taught that no matter how perverse the creatures become, Christ's atonement is sufficient because he is stronger than evil and the devil. Siegvolck called Christ the "special" Saviour of believers, but indicated that he was still the "real" Saviour of all the rest of men. Moreover, if even one creature was to remain in the power of hell and death then the devil would be able to boast of his power and scorn God. But, he insisted, Christ will ultimately conquer sin, hell, and death granting salvation to all men.[51]

---

[47] Ramsay, op. cit., I, 177, 181.

[48] The Mystic's Plea, pp. 12-15.

In his Lectures on the Prophecies that Remain to be Fulfilled published in 1788, Winchester reiterated in more lengthy form the same basic ideas as in The Mystic's Plea. The most important subject of prophecy was the final restoration of fallen intelligences.[52]

The same year that Winchester published his Lectures on the

---

[49] Ibid., p. 16. [50] Ramsay, op. cit., I, 430-431.

[51] Siegvolck, op. cit., pp. 37-39.

[52] Lectures on the Prophecies, p. 3.

Prophecies, he also published his most important work, The Universal Restoration, Exhibited in Four Dialogues between a Minister and His Friend. The doctrine of restoration is spelled out in conversation form in which the friend asked questions about restoration and Winchester answered them. The first dialogue dealt with the meaning of the words "everlasting," "for ever," and "eternal." One of the things that captured Winchester's attention and which he subsequently used was Siegvolck's treatment of the words "eternal" and "everlasting." These words were interpreted to mean an especially long duration but not necessarily endless duration. There are three kinds of eternities according to Siegvolck--absolutely endless eternity, endless eternity which has beginning but no end, and eternity which has beginning and ending. Absolutely endless eternity is used of God and his attributes. Endless eternity with beginning and without end is applied to divine creatures and of the good that comes from God. It also refers to the glory of the believers in heaven. The third kind of eternity--that which has beginning and ending--is applied to several things including man's life time, the Levitical priesthood, the time before Christ's incarnation, the periods of time of the present and future ages, the present wicked world, and the eternity of evil.[53]

Winchester stated that the emphasis in scripture is on everlasting life, not everlasting punishment, and listed numerous passages to support his assertion. There is a difference between everlasting life and everlasting punishment. The Greek word in Hebrews 7:16

---

[53] Siegvolck, op. cit., pp. 48-52. Dialogues, 1799, pp. 12ff.

akalutos which is translated "endless" really means "indissoluble." That word is never used with punishment. His conclusion was that the writers of scripture spoke of future life in a different way from future punishment.[54] Those who insist on the doctrine of endless punishment make sin either a God or a divine creature and fall into the Manichean heresy, because they believe in two contrary gods, one good and one evil.[55] Winchester extracted this directly from Siegvolck.[56] In turn William Vidler suggested that sin could not exist endlessly unless it had its root in God, or unless there were two self-existent beings, good and evil.

In the second dialogue, Winchester agreed that the lake of fire is the place of punishment for the wicked. But at the time of the second death the lake of fire will end and all rational parts of the creation "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God."[57] Since the second death shall cease there will be an end to tormenting pain. Even the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit will end when death is destroyed.[58] When Christ preached to the spirits in prison, his purpose was to bring them out, that he might be lord of the living and the dead.

Those who opposed the universal restoration did so on the basis that it removed all bars to licentiousness since the threat of punishment was gone. The third dialogue is directed to this objection. God is the universal creator. It ennobles human nature to be told that God is the creator and first cause. How can one reason that the universal benevolence of God for all his creatures leads to licentiousness, Winchester asked? "If all the individuals of the whole human race were to believe that God loved each one of them, would not the same cause produce the same effect?"[59]

---

[54] Ibid., pp. 28-32. [55] Ibid., p. 34. [56] Siegvolck, p. 14.

[57] Romans 8:19-22. [58] Dialogues, 1799, pp. 44-56, 61.

The third principle upon which Winchester built his argument against the charge of licentiousness was the belief that Christ died for all. The fact that Christ died for all certainly cannot be said to cause wickedness.[60] A further basis was the unchangeableness of God. Once God loves his creatures, he always loves them. He loved them when he made them, though he never loved their sins. God has declared that he loved his creatures even when they were sinners. It is his unchangeable love of the sinner and his eternal hatred of sin that help us understand the restoration.[61] An additional reason for believing in the restoration against the charge of licentiousness is the immutability of God's counsels. Hebrews tells us that God cannot lie, and Ephesians tells us that it is God's purpose to gather all things together in Christ.[62] The final basis is that God has given all things into Christ's hand, and it is the will of God that Christ should lose none of those God has given to him. He concluded his defense:

> These are the first principles upon which the doctrine of the Restoration stands and by which it is supported; and as these have all been considered, and proved to have no tendency to encourage sin, separately, much less can they have any such

---

[59] Ibid., pp. 92-93.

[60] Ibid., pp. 96.

[61] Ibid., p. 99.

[62] Hebrews 6:17, 18; Ephesians 1:8-11.

> tendency jointly; and then it follows, that a doctrine which seems necessarily deduced or inferred, by undeniable consequences, from all these considerations united, cannot be false, or have any evil tendency.[63]

Another objection raised and answered was that restoration was not practical. Winchester replied that we are commanded to love all mankind, to do good to all men, to forgive all men their trespasses, and to pray for all men. What could be more in harmony than the belief that God loves all men?[64]

Taking the offensive, Winchester indicated that endless punishment has not prevented evil. The claim that endless punishment does deter evil is for many the strongest reason for believing it. Moreover, not only does it fail in that, but it is also unnatural. Limited punishment is natural and reasonable.[65]

To those who insisted on the infinity of sin Winchester replied that if sin is infinite it must be one of the perfections of deity. When the word "infinite" is used with sin it really means a very great multitude. No actions of man can be considered infinite. If all sin is infinite there can be no degrees of sin. Whatever the state of his sin, Jesus reconciled all sinners for all their sins.

> I conclude, that, let sin be ever so great, the grace of God is greater: and if you will have it that sin is of infinite magnitude, I hope you will not deny that propitiation of Jesus Christ, which he made for all sins, the same character. Therefore, if you magnify sin, and insist upon the greatness of its demerit, I will endeavor to magnify the all- powerful Redeemer above it, and speak of his power to redeem all the human race, for whom he shed his blood; and then you will gain nothing in

---

[63] Dialogues, 1799, pp. 103-104.

[64] Ibid., p. 114.

[65] Ibid., p. 121-122.

> favour of the doctrine of endless damnation, by all your arguments founded upon the infinity of sin: Christ being far more infinite to save, than sin can be to destroy: and as he has undertaken to redeem and bring back those who were lost, there is no danger of his failing to perform it.[66]

Winchester believed his doctrine of restoration was in harmony with scripture, in accord with the justice of God, and reasonable.

> In this scriptural system, the sinner is punished, sin is destroyed, and the creature is restored. It is in every respect just, reasonable, and good; and is such as all good men could wish, both for the honour of God, and the happiness of all mankind.[67]

About the time he arrived in Philadelphia to begin his ministry there, Winchester also became confirmed in his belief in universal restoration. His adoption of that doctrine was to have severe repercussions for him and his congregation.

Conflict at First Baptist Church

Fresh from his successes in South Carolina and the revival in New England, Winchester arrived in Philadelphia in early October, 1780, to attend the Philadelphia Baptist Association Annual Meeting as a messenger from the Warren Association. He was preceded to Philadelphia by his reputation as a preacher who attracted a large following. This was sufficient to cause the important First Baptist Church to be interested in the prospect of his becoming their minister. The church met and instructed their committee to endeavor to get Winchester to stay and preach for them for a year. The committee did not proceed to call on

---

[66] Ibid., p. 185-189.

[67] Elhanan Winchester, Good News, or the Final Restoration of All Men (Adelaid: Printed by David Gall, 1866), p. iii.

Winchester because there was a small minority of people who were interested in the possibility of calling the Rev. Oliver Hart of the Baptist Church at Charleston, South Carolina. Hart had come to Philadelphia to escape the occupying English army. He was interested in receiving a call from one of the Philadelphia Association churches. Winchester was invited to preach on Saturday evening and Hart on Sunday. On Monday the congregation met and voted to call Winchester. Hart was later called to the Hopewell church which he served many years.

At the Association meeting Winchester was chosen together with Rev. William Rogers and Mr. John Pitman to be messengers of the Philadelphia Association to the Warren Association at its next annual meeting.

Winchester accepted the pastorate for six months only stating that he did so because there were a number of the congregation opposed to him. Then "if everything should prove agreeable"[68] he would consider accepting an extension of the call.

Early success attended his preaching. Large crowds came to hear him. It became necessary to find a larger meeting house. St. Paul's church was obtained to hold his followers.

It was not long, however, before conflict emerged. Though it had apparently been known for some time by some of the members, it was at the meeting of the church, March 5, 1781, that the matter of the universal restoration was brought to the attention of the people publicly. After a lengthy discussion resulting in the formation of two groups--those supporting Winchester and those opposed to him (the latter called themselves the "Protestors") a protest was written and entered into the minutes by those endeavoring to preserve the orthodox faith.

---

[68] An Address from the Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, to their Sister Churches (Philadelphia: Printed by Robert Aitkin, 1781), p. 4, hereafter referred to as An Address. In Remarks Upon a Pamphlet Intitled "An Address from the Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, to their Sister Churches" (Philadelphia: Ben. Towne, 1781), written in reply to An Address, the number of persons opposed to Winchester is listed as 25 out of a congregation of about 175, p. 13, hereafter referred to as Remarks.

> Whereas the Doctrine of universal Restoration of Bad men and Angels in the fullest Extent has for a Considerable time privately and of late more publickly ben Introduced Among us, and is now openly Avowed by som of the Members, to the great Disorder & Confusion of our Church, and wounding the hearts of many of the Brethren Contrary to our Confession of faith--We whos Naims are underwritten do in the Most Sollam Manner from Reall Convictiction of Duty seriously protest against the same, as a Most Dangerous Hericy.[69]

The protest was signed by some fifty-seven persons including Thomas Shields and John McKim, clerk of the church. These two had been the committee to call on Winchester and offer him the pastorate.

An attempt by the Protestors to have the church appoint a committee to visit Winchester and inform him that he could no longer preach in First Church because he held the doctrine of universal salvation was lost by a vote of twenty-four to thirty-five.

After the meeting was dismissed the Protestors met and appointed a committee consisting of Thomas Shields and John McKim to inform Winchester of their protest and ask him to resign the pulpit.[70]

---

[69] Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Vol. 3, 1779-January, 1786, pp. 43-44. Although eventually 92 persons signed the protest, only 24 signed it at that meeting. A vote taken at that meeting shows 24 voting to remove Winchester and 35 supporting him. See Remarks, p. 13.

Two days later the Protestors met again and reported their failure to see Winchester even though they had called on him twice, the second time by appointment. They were instructed to write him but their letter was returned unopened. In the letter they added a note that they would pay him what they owed. It seems clear throughout the conflict that the leaders of the congregation were the leaders of the Protestors. This probably accounted for their ability to get rid of Winchester even though he was supported by a majority of the congregation.

Incensed at Winchester's disregard of their protest, the Protestors seized the meeting house and locked-out Winchester and his followers. They obtained the keys "through a special instance of Providence."[71]

One of those who remained for the March 5th after-meeting was Ezekiel Merriam. Merriam apparently was fond of Winchester but may not yet have chosen to be his supporter. Merriam objected to the secretive actions of the Protestors whose similar request for a committee to visit Winchester had been voted down in the congregational meeting. Laying the keys to the meeting house on the table he objected that he would have nothing to do with their actions. One of the Protestors immediately took the keys and proceeded to lock-out Winchester and friends. When the Supporters learned they had been locked-out, they demanded the keys. Their demand refused they broke into the meeting house and took possession, changing the lock.[72]

---

[70] The proceedings of the Protestors are faithfully recorded due to the fact that among the leaders of the Protestors was John McKim, clerk of the church. He entered the material into the church records and copied by hand other letters dealing with the conflict into the minutes at the appropriate places. Therefore, the minutes and An Address give us only the Protestors side of the argument. Winchester's friends published their version of the incident in Remarks, their reply to An Address which was sent to the churches of the Association.

[71] An Address, p. 8; Remarks, p. 13.

Determined to take some more drastic action, the Protestors chose Rev. William Rogers, former pastor of First Church (1772-1775) who had remained a member of the congregation after his resignation, and later professor at the University of Pennsylvania, to meet with Rev. Samuel Jones, minister of the Pennepek church and moderator of the Philadelphia Baptist Association to acquaint him with the things that had transpired at the church and to enlist his advice and help. Subsequently the Protestors met on March 12, with Jones and the Rev. Joseph Powell of the Konoloway church. It was decided that the Protestors should appoint a committee to meet with the supporters of Winchester,

> for the purpose, of Explaining our Conduct, obviating any Difficultys, and using whatever Means may be thought Necessary to prevail on all our Bretherin to Join us in protesting Against, that Dangerous Doctrin of universall Restoration, and to take any farther Measures that May be thought Most Expedient for the Reclaiming those that have in any ways Imbraced said Doctrin of universal Restoration Amongst us, & Compromising the Differances that heath unhapily taken place....[73]

---

[72] In Remarks, p. 14, the Supporters explained how they took possession of the meeting house. They put a boy through one of the wooden panes and he unlocked the door from the inside.

[73] Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Vol. 3, pp. 47-48.

Instead of meeting with Winchester's supporters the committee invited Rev. Oliver Hart of Hopewell, Rev. Samuel Jones, Rev. David Jones, pastor at the church in Great Valley, Rev. William Vanhorn of Southampton, and Rev. John Boggs, to meet with them on Friday evening, March 30, 1781, at the home of Col. Samuel Miles, Esq., chairman of the Protestors committee. Miles was a former captain of the First City Troop and held the rank of colonel in the provincial military forces. The ministers agreed to attend the next congregational meeting on April 2nd.

Winchester had arranged to preach on the first Sunday in April to the German Baptists at Germantown, about eight miles from Philadelphia. The day before he was to preach there, Winchester discovered that the opposition members of the church had invited a committee of ministers of the Philadelphia Baptist Association to meet and debate with him. He allowed them to use his pulpit and continued with his previously arranged engagement with the Dunkers, visiting Dr. George DeBenneville on Saturday and remaining overnight in Germantown. The Protestors claimed that he left in order to avoid meeting the ministers in debate.

When the ministers arrived at the meeting their presence was opposed by John Drinker, one of Winchester's friends, who asked them to withdraw since this was meeting of the church and they had not been invited by the church. Following an exchange of opinions it was agreed by both factions to invite one of the ministers to discuss the doctrine of universal restoration with Winchester before the entire congregation.

John Boggs was "pitched upon" to represent the Protestors. Winchester returned and agreed to debate with Boggs. After the ministers had come back into the meeting, Boggs refused to debate insisting that such a discussion would be unprofitable because this was not a new doctrine, there was not sufficient time, and at any rate he was not prepared to argue his case. Winchester's followers insisted he refused because he was afraid that Winchester would get the better of him.[74]

Though he would not debate with Winchester, Boggs was not about to retire from the meeting. Instead he asked Winchester directly if he believed in the universal restoration. Despite the declarations of his friends that he need not answer the question because the ministers had not the right to question him, having been invited back to the meeting for the express purpose of debating universal restoration, Winchester declared that he had indeed come to adopt that doctrine.

According to Winchester's supporters, Boggs declared:

> If you held those Sentiments and intended to propagate them when you came to this City, you are a *base Man* and a *Deceiver*; for you came here as a Baptist Minister, and if you came in with a Design to hold and propagate this Doctrine, you are an Impostor.[75]

At that point Winchester described the manner in which he came to believe in the universal restoration of all things.[76] For two years he had been having doubts about the doctrine of endless misery. Yet he refused to adopt the restoration and even preached against it. He continued:

---

[74] *Remarks*, p. 16.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

> When I came to this City, I was not fully confirmed one Way nor the other; had never advanced the Doctrine in publick, and was determined never to procalim it, even though I should believe it.

On one occasion he had talked with two of his friends about the doctrine. One of them went to Oliver Hart and Joseph Powell and told them. They then talked to Winchester who told them he had not preached it and asked them not to go any further with it. Somehow it became public. Winchester said:

> When I found I must either retract, or support it, I endeavored to search for the Truth, by Reading, Meditation and Prayer; and thus came to be fully established in the Doctrine of the final Restoration of all Things.[77]

After this exchange Boggs is reported to have agreed that Winchester was "an honest Man and a Christian." Indicating his willingness at any time to discuss the doctrine, Winchester left the meeting.

One of the protestors, Thomas Shields, asked all who were opposed to the doctrine of Restoration to go upstairs, and invited the ministers to join them. Unable to take any more drastic action because of the size of the group supporting Winchester, the Protestors proposed that a committee selected from both sides meet the next morning at nine o'clock to find a way to settle the differences. The committee chosen for the Protestors included Rev. William Rogers, Col. Miles, Thomas Shields, John McKim, and David Bowen, and for the Supporters, John Drinker, Edward Middleton, Ezekiel Merriam, Griffith Levering, and John Conneley.

---

[77] Ibid.

McKim noted at the bottom of that page of minutes that George Westcott declared at that meeting that "if he had not Believed the Doctrin of universall restoration before, that he was convinced of it by Mr. Harts sermon yesterday."[78]

The committee met as directed and after some debating both sides agreed to ask the ministers to write an opinion which was subsequently delivered to the committee and to the congregation which met that night. The report of the ministers recommended dismission Winchester who had admitted his heresy and asserted that the Protestors were the true Baptist church because they followed the Philadelphia Confession of Faith.

> We the Subscribers being Called upon by the Baptist Church in this place to give our Advice, and Councel to a Committee chose by the Contending partys in said Church Respecting what may be best to be Don in their present unhappy situation--
> Are of Oppinion
> That the Confession of faith Adopted by the Baptist Churches of the Association, usually Meeting Annually at Philadelphia, Contains a Summary of gospel Truths received by us as a Denomination of Christians--That the Doctrin of the universall Restoration of bad men and Angels from Hell is a foundmentall Deviation from the Above Articatls of faith
>
> That those of the said Church who have Adopted the s^{d} Error have Departed from the foundation Principles of the Baptist Society and---that those of the s^{d} Church who have protested Against the Above Erones Doctrin, are the Baptist Church in this place--and, whereas Mr. Elhanan Winchester, did yesterday before the Church, and in our presence Acknowledge his holding the Above mentioned Error, he ought therefore to be Dismissed from further services in this Church, and we also Recommend to them to seek other supplies without Delay, as the most probable Means of Restoring peace, and order in the church--Signed

---

[78] Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Vol. 3, p. 51.

Oliver Hart
Samuel Jones
David Jones
William Vanhorn
John Boggs[79]

A concurring report was filed by Joseph Powell on April 7, who had been absent at the earlier meeting.

The friends of Winchester would not accept the report insisting that the report was out of order because the ministers had been called upon only to advise, not to pass judgment, because they endeavored to decide who was the church, and because it was not calculated to help reconcile their differences which was the express purpose in calling the meeting. At the evening meeting they registered their dissatisfaction and tried to remind the church that this was opposed to their belief in the independence of the churches.[80]

Despite the remonstrance of the supporters of Winchester the action of the Protestors was not without precedent. Some years before the Charleston Association had been queried about the matter of conflict of conscience within the church. The question was put like this:

> Whether all matters debated in a church are to be determined by plurality of voices, and that determination final, though it grieve the consciences or some?

No doubt the answer which was given on that occasion was known to all the churches. It is probably that ruling on which the committee of ministers based their decision. Among those serving on the committee was Oliver Hart who had been the pastor at Charleston and a leader in the Charleston Association. The ruling of the Charleston Association was as follows:

---

[79] *Ibid.*, p. 52-53. [80] *Remarks*, p. 21; *An Address*, pp. 10-12.

> no church, or majority of a church, has power to bind the conscience; If therefore the majority should introduce errors subversive of the peace of the church, and wound the consciences of the brethren, the minority may, after all proper methods to reclaim the rest by calm reasoning, by calling in the assistance of other churches, and by referring the matter to the Association, should these prove ineffectual, be received as the church, and the majority disowned.[81]

On April 9, two further attempts were made to resolve the difficulty. Col. Miles proposed that each side select a number of persons to render a decision. This was agreed to by both sides but not carried out because at a subsequent meeting the Protestors rejected it. The other suggestion came out of a meeting held by the Protestors on April 5. It called for either a number of members from the Baptist churches of the Association or a number of ministers from the Association to settle the question. The Supporters could not accept this solution seeing that those called upon to decide would be biased against Winchester. At that time it was agreed by the Protestors that if this plan was not accepted by the supporters of Winchester, Col. Miles was to declare in "a Solemn, Formal Manner" that they, the Protestors, were the Baptist church, and were separating themselves from those holding the universal restoration.[82]

The issue was now clearly joined--who was the true Baptist church in Philadelphia, the majority supporting the minister, or the minority claiming allegiance to the Confession?

---

[81] Wood Furman, History of the Charleston Association of Baptist Churches (Charleston, S. C.: From the Press of J. Hoff, 1811), pp. 36-37.

[82] Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Vol. 3, pp. 54-57; An Address, p. 13; Remarks, pp. 22-24.

Unwilling to give up the property which they presently held the Supporters suggested several courses of action. (1) That each group have its own minister as John Boggs had suggested, one to preach in the morning and the other in the evening, (2) to divide the property equally and separate, the Supporters being willing to accept a money settlement instead of the property, (3) to let the church vote from a number of ministers who they might like, the Supporters intending to include Winchester's name among them, certain that by their superior numbers they could elect him, or (4) to have referees from the Episcopal church and from among the Quakers to settle the dispute.[83]

The reply from the Protestors indicated that they were not in a mood to bargain. They argued (1) that they could not agree to having two ministers because Winchester was not a Baptist minister, since his doctrine was contrary to the Confession of Faith, the Catechism, and the Treatise on Discipline, (2) neither could they divide the property because they were the true Baptist church and the property properly belonged to them, (3) they could not vote unless only orthodox Baptist ministers were considered and this would eliminate Winchester, and (4) they would rather have the question of property settled by law, but would agree to having a committee of four members each from the

---

[83] Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Vol. 3, pp. 55-56; Remarks, pp. 25-26.

Episcopalians, Quakers, and Presbyterians.[84]

The Supporters did not accept the latter proposal, but acting as the Baptist church set aside May 15 as day to elect a minister. Early that morning the Protestors broke into the meeting house and took possession. To keep the Supporters out of the meeting house, the Protestors sent for the magistrate and constables. The next day three of Winchester's followers were arrested for attempting to break in.[85]

Not being able to get into the church building, Winchester applied for and got the use of a hall at the University of Pennsylvania every Sunday morning at eight and six in the afternoon. More than half of the congregation left with Winchester and eventually formed the Society of Universal Baptists.[86] The Protestors immediately requested pulpit supply from the Association. A committee was appointed to inform Winchester he could no longer preach in the pulpit and to pay him for his services. Winchester refused to accept the money proffered in payment because that would be tacit acceptance of the Protestors' claim to be the Baptist church.

In order to inform the churches of the Philadelphia Association concerning what had transpired at the church, the Protestors requested Rogers, Col. Miles, Shields, and McKim to prepare an address in the form of a circular letter to the sister churches. In An Address from the Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, to their Sister Churches, the Protestors lodged five charges against Winchester including the charge of seeking popularity.

---

[84] _Ibid._, pp. 26-28.

[85] _Ibid._, p. 24. In _The Mystic's Plea_, Winchester said that the Protestors, armed with swords and pistols, were barricaded inside the church. He called them "the most infamous and sacrilegious Banditti barricaded in the said Church," pp. 3, 5.

[86] In the _Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association_, pp. 157 and 179, the First Church is listed as having 172 members in 1777, and only 86 in 1781. Winchester brought in some members while he was pastor, so it is likely that more than 86 left with him. The Minutes of the First Baptist Church do not list the membership totals yearly so it is difficult to ascertain the exact number.

> Popular applause, the idol which too many worship, was soon discovered to be an object zealously sought for, and courted by Mr. Winchester. To accomplish this, persons were every week hastily admitted to baptism, upon the slightest examination; though we really believe, that among the number are several sincere Christians, who, during the season of trial, have not been ashamed openly to discountenance his errors.[87]

In addition to seeking popularity and hasty baptisms, Winchester was accused of discussing the restoration in private in order to seduce people away from the truth. The Protestors described him as "creeping into houses, and leading captive persons of weak capacities."[88] A fourth charge made against him was that whenever he was asked about his belief in universal restoration he would reply that if any division should take place he would leave. The final mark against him was, they said, that he agreed not to make public his belief, but he proceeded to do so in violation of his promise.

The charge of hasty baptisms was also charged against Winchester by his successor in Welsh Neck, Rev. Edmund Botsford.[89] To answer the Protestors, the Supporters published a tract presumably written by

---

[87] An Address, p. 4.

[88] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[89] Welsh Neck Church Book, p. 30.

Winchester entitled Remarks Upon a Pamphlet Intitled "An Address from the Baptist Church in Philadelphia, to their Sister Churches." The charge of hasty baptism is answered by insisting that the blame must not be attributed alone to Winchester since in order to be received into membership the candidates were questioned by the congregation and admitted only when they had satisfied the church concerning their religious experience and knowledge of the Baptist faith.[90]

The circular letter written by the Protestors is concluded with an excerpt from a sermon preached in New York in 1742, by Gilbert Tennent:

> Forasmuch as the church of Christ is begirt with numerous enemies of various forms; enemies open and secret, who labour almost incessantly, either by force or fraud, to corrupt her in her principlesl it is of the last necessity to be constantly upon our guard, and especially in a time of public and epidemical infection, lest we be betrayed into the labyrinths of error and mistake, BY THE PLAUSIBLE PRETENCES OF SEDUCERS.[91]

At the annual meeting in 1781, the Philadelphia Association took official action supporting the action of the Protestors, endorsing the report of the ministers, and recommending that the church appoint a committee to visit all the non-signers to give them opportunity to sign the protest and to excommunicate those who failed to sign.[92]

The Protestors visited the members who had not signed and invited them to sign under pain of excommunication. Eventually, the original twenty-four signatures reached fifty-seven as reported in An Address, and subsequently ninety-two.

---

[90] Remarks, p. 8 [91] An Address, p. 16.

[92] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 176.

By December, 1781, the committee had visited sixty of Winchester's followers, all of whom refused to sign the protest. Sixteen of the sixty were formally declared excommunicated on Sunday, December 9. On the thirteenth another thirty were excommunicated. At that same meeting a writ was read which had been received from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania ordering Col. Miles, Joseph Watkins, John McKim, Benjamin Shaw, and Thomas Shields to appear before the court on January 7, 1782, to show cause why a writ of mandamas should not be issued directing them to admit Winchester to the use of the pulpit at the meeting house as the minister of the church. Winchester had filed suit to gain use of the meeting house as the legally settled minister of the Baptist church in Philadelphia.[93] Later Winchester withdrew his action from the court. This news was conveyed to the Rev. Thomas Ustich in a letter from William Rogers, dated April 27, 1782, inviting him to become pastor of the church.[94] The case was re-submitted and came to trial on July 8, 1784, and after two days of examination, the jury returned a verdict about eleven o'clock in the evening in favor of the Protestors.[95]

For some years after this unpleasant incident in the life of the First Baptist Church, a close scrutiny was made of its members to be certain they did not adopt the doctrine of universal salvation. In 1785, Elisha Gordon had served the church as a messenger to the Philadelphia Association. Two years later he and Nathaniel Prentice were accused of professing this error "as preached by John Murray." Subsequently Gordon was excluded from membership. Asserting he was not sure about his belief in universal salvation, Prentice was given time to think it over and make up his mind. Finally he repudiated it.[96]

---

[93] Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Vol. 3, p. 80.

[94] *Ibid.*, p. 85.

[95] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

Among the others accused of this heresy was Morgan Edwards, Baptist historian and former minister of the church, who had signed the original protest with the qualification that he signed it simply to acknowledge he did not believe the doctrine, not to oust Winchester for preaching it. He wrote, "Morgan Edwards signs this protest against the doctrine of universal salvation under the character only of a doctrine that he does not believe."[97] Rev. John Rippon, the successor to the famous Dr. Gill who was renowned for his Calvinistic orthodox writings, wrote to President James Manning of Brown University, May 1, 1784, inquiring whether or not it was true that Edwards had written a vindication of Winchester. Manning's reply indicated that Edwards had not written to vindicate Winchester, but that Edwards had read a manuscript to him which did appear favorable to Winchester. Manning urged him not to publish it because it would add "to the long list of imprudent things which had already so greatly grieved his friends and so injured his reputation."[98]

The struggle had gone full circle by 1788, when Rev. William

---

[96] Ibid., Vol. 4, pp. 24, 26, 33, 49.

[97] Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 43.

[98] "Letter from Rev. John Rippon, May 1, 1784, to Rev. James Manning;" "Letter to Rev. John Rippon from Rev. James Manning, Aug. 3, 1784;" in Reuben A. Guild, Early History of Brown University, pp. 375, 378.

Rogers, one of the four spokesmen for the Protestors, was himself accused at a church meeting of having become a Universalist.[99]

Society of Universal Baptists

Forced to surrender the Baptist meeting house in Philadelphia, Elhanan Winchester and his followers made arrangements to use a hall at the University of Pennsylvania. They had intended to remain there until their case was heard by the Supreme Court of Philadelphia and then to return to the Baptist meeting house which they were certain would be given to them. As the court decided in favor of the orthodox party, Winchester and his friends remained at the University of Pennsylvania until 1785.

To comfort and encourage his followers Winchester preached his famous sermon The Outcasts Comforted, based on Isaiah 66:5,

> Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified, but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

Reproach and persecution must be expected by the Christian, Winchester said. Did not the Lord remind his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount that they would be persecuted for righteousness' sake? At such a time they were to rejoice and be exceeding glad. Referring to the various divisions within the church, Winchester said each opposes the other as being erroneous and heretical. Christianity however, is not intended to divide but to lead to the salvation and happiness of all men. Because of that belief we have been censured and cast out. "We have experienced what it is to be hated and cast out by our brethren, for the name of the Lord, for the sake of the dear Saviour, and the testimony that we hold."[100]

---

[99] Minutes of the First Baptist Church, Vol. 4, pp. 29-30.

In 1754 Winchester endeavored to build a meeting house through subscriptions. Although John Murray encouraged his followers to support the project, Winchester was not able to raise sufficient funds. On November 24, 1785, Anthony Cuthbert and Abraham Collins, shipbuilders, bought the Masons' Lodge, located in Lodge Alley, near Second Street, north of Walnut, for $4,000 for the use of Winchester's followers who were calling themselves the Society of Universal Baptists. The Preamble to the deed of sale dated January 16, 1786, indicated that since they had been expelled by the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia for professing the doctrine of the universal love of God and the final restitution of all things they were now joined together to form the religious society called the Society of Universal Baptists.[101]

Among the friends of the Society of Universal Baptists were Thomas Say, Dr. Benjamin Rush, Dr. John Redman and Christopher Marshall. The Quaker, Thomas Say, was an apothecary chemist by trade. As early as 1741 he claimed he had a vision of universal restoration. Dr. John Redman was the first president of the college of physicians of Philadelphia. Born in Philadelphia in 1722, Redman had studied medicine in Edinburgh, Paris and Leyden. He was renowned for his piety and generosity. Christopher Marshall, to whom we are indebted for most of our information concerning the Universal Baptists, indicated that Redman took an active role in the propagation of the doctrine of universal salvation.[102]

---

[100] Elhanan Winchester, The Outcasts Comforted (Philadelphia, 1782), pp. 19-20.

[101] J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884 (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts and Company, 1884), II, 1443.

In a letter of Elhanan Winchester written November 12, 1791, Benjamin Rush referred to his "dear friend and old preceptor, in medicine, Dr. Redman," who upon his reading Winchester's lectures on the prophecies called Winchester "our Theological Newton."[103]

Winchester's closest friend among the Universal Baptists was Dr. Benjamin Rush. Rush had been brought up as a Presbyterian, educated at Princeton, and studied medicine in Philadelphia, Edinburgh, London and Paris. In 1769 he became professor of Chemistry at Philadelphia College. In 1789 he was elected professor of Medicine. In 1791 he took the same position at the University of Pennsylvania until 1796, when he also assumed the professorship of Physics, until his death in 1813.

At the time that he met Winchester, Rush had gone through a period of quarreling with certain Presbyterian political leaders. Rush felt that the Calvinist dogmas were inhumane and anti-republican. Winchester's preaching that all men could be saved accorded more with his political point of view. After becoming acquainted with Winchester's universal restoration, Rush wrote "From that time I have never doubted upon the subject of the salvation of all men." He indicated that he arrived at the conviction of universal restoration through reading Stonehouse, Siegvolck, White, Chauncy, and Winchester. He indicated that " I always admitted with each of those authors future punishment, and of long duration."[104]

---

[102] Christopher Marshall, Diary, November 25, 1788.

[103] L. H. Butterfield (ed.), Letters of Benjamin Rush (Princeton: Published for American Philosophical Society by Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 611.

Rush felt that Winchester's doctrine of universal restoration suited him just right. In a letter to Dr. Richard Price of Newington Green, near London, October 15, 1785, Rush told the non-conformist minister about changes that were taking place in the Episcopal Church in its worship, discipline and articles. He pointed out that there were also important changes taking place among the Presbyterians and Baptists who were rapidly joining Winchester:

> While these changes are going forward in the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterians and Baptists are showing an equal spirit of innovation. A considerable body of them who had been educated in the strictest principles of Calvinism, and many of whom are people who have long been eminent for their piety, have separated from their respective churches and are now forming an independent society under the direction of Mr. Winchester, an eloquent and popular Baptist preacher who has openly and avowedly preached the doctrine of final restoration. Tenets of the same kind are now spreading rapidly in New England.[105]

When Winchester left America to go to England, Rush wrote a letter to Richard Price to introduce Winchester. In the course of that letter he mentioned a Mr. Blair, a Presbyterian minister, who had openly stated his belief in restoration from his pulpit.[106]

After he had read Winchester's Lectures on the Prophecies, Rush wrote Winchester praising him for the outstanding job he had done in making the Old Testament and New Testament intelligible. He encouraged Winchester because he approached the study of the scriptures in the same way that the philosophers examined the works of nature in a careful detailed fashion. Indicating that Universalism was spreading more and more among persons of piety, Rush predicted the general acceptance of restoration: "Your works are beyond the present state of knowledge in our world, but the time must come when they will rise into universal estimation and bear down all the modern systems of our schools."[107]

---

[104] Ibid., "A Memorial," p. 125. [105] Ibid., p. 372.

[106] "Letter to Richard Price, July 29, 1787," Ibid., pp. 432-433.

Universalism has earned a reputation as the poor man's religion in contrast to Unitarianism's appeal to the upper class. That is due in part to a letter that Rush wrote to Griffith Evans in Chester County, Pa., in which he indicated that Winchester's preaching services each Sunday evening were crowded, but "they are composed chiefly of the second and lower classes of our citizens. He is, as usual, eloquent, and Scriptural, and irresistable in his reasonings upon all subjects."[108]

John Seward, a clergyman and physician, from Northumberland County, Virginia, attended Rush's lectures at the University of Pennsylvania in 1794. Writing to Seward in December 1796, Rush indicated that if infidelity was to be combatted effectively, men would have to adopt the view that God is the father of the whole human race and atonement would have to be extended to all. He added that the clergyman's library would not be complete without the works of Hartley, Stonehouse, and Winchester.[109]

---

[107] "Letter to Elhanan Winchester, May 11, 1791," Ibid., pp. 581-582.

[108] "Letter to Griffith Evans, March 4, 1796," Ibid., pp. 773.

From the diary of Christopher Marshall we are able to extract a number of details concerning Winchester and the Society of Universal Baptists. Some years prior to Winchester's adoption of the doctrine of Universal Salvation, Marshall had read Siegvolck's Everlasting Gospel and Stonehouse's Universal Restitution. So taken with these two works was he that he distributed them among his friends. He gave a copy of Siegvolck to Christopher Gadsden, Congressman from South Carolina.[110]

Marshall, a Quaker, never united with any Universalist church, though he was an avid follower of Winchester, and advocated the doctrine of intense future punishment. Marshall was among the group expelled by the Quakers for maintaining the lawfulness of a defensive war at the beginning of the Revolution.

Marshall attended Winchester's meetings regularly, visited him in his home, invited Winchester to his home often and considered him a close friend.[111]

After Winchester left Philadelphia, the entries in the Diary taper off. Instead of attending three or four times a month, Marshall after November, 1787, attended approximately three or four times a year. Among the times that he attended were the occasions when John Murray came to Philadelphia to preach.

---

[109] "Letter to John Seward, Dec. 28, 1796," Ibid., p. 773.

[110] Christopher Marshall, Diary, May 9, 1775. It may be that Winchester got his copies of Siegvolck and Stonehouse from Marshall.

[111] Ibid., June 10, 1781, through 1790.

When Winchester announced his decision to leave Philadelphia and go to England, Marshall was greatly disturbed. He wrote in the Diary:

> He, Winchester, spoke, not to my satisfaction as the text by his definition did not prove as what I apprehend. Liberty for him to go to England before the crop was safely Housed, or other Husbandmen truly appointed for to take care. And under the direction of Heaven see it measurably done.[112]

The following day Marshall again attended the meeting of the Universal Baptists. At that time Winchester took his farewell of the congregation and indicated that on the next day he and his wife would leave for England in the "Swallow" under Captain Blight.[113]

Apparently Marshall was disturbed enough not to see Winchester off on his voyage for England. His Diary entry the day Winchester left said,

> I conclude as it's said that Elhannah Winchester and wife left this Morning in Waggon with some of their friends attending them to Chester in order to go aboard the ship before Mentioned, which had filled down there. Said to be near or above 4 persons on horseback...accompanied them.[114]

Although he did not frequent the Universal Society any longer, Marshall maintained his interest in the spread of universal restoration. After being visited by Abel Sarjent, who began publication of the Free Universal Magazine, Marshall became a trustee and contributor both financially and editorially.[115]

---

[112] Ibid., July 28, 1787. [113] Ibid., July 29, 1787.

[114] Ibid., July 30, 1787. During the years that Winchester was in England, correspondence passed between Marshall and him, but unfortunately it appears to be lost.

Winchester's return to the Universal Baptist meeting on Lombard Street, on August 14, 1795, was duly noted by Marshall. The next day Marshall visited Winchester and his wife to welcome them back.[116]

The younger half-brother of Elhanan Winchester was also active in the Society which Winchester founded. In 1784, at the age of twenty-one, Moses Winchester began preaching. He was pastor at the Seventh Day Baptist Church at Shiloh, near Cohansey, New Jersey.[117] He traveled to New England with Winchester in 1785 and preached there. On occasion he also preached at the Universal meeting house in Philadelphia.[118] He attended each of the Philadelphia conventions of the Universalists in 1790, 1791, and 1792. He died still a young man in 1793.

Elihu Palmer is remembered chiefly for his organization of deistical societies in the last decade of the eighteenth century. He, too, became a Universalist in the course of his progress toward rationalism. After serving the Presbyterian Church of Newtown, Long Island, from 1788 to 1789, Palmer came to Philadelphia and associated himself with John Fitch, with whom he organized the Universal Society in February 1790. The Universal Society lasted approximately a year. In March of 1791, Palmer who had attempted to become a member of the Society of Universal Baptists, but was rejected because of his denial of the divinity of Christ, rented a room in Church Alley to which John Fitch's Universal Society and some of the members of the Universal Baptists went to hear him preach against the divinity of Christ. Bishop White of the Episcopal Church used his influence to have the building closed to Palmer.[119]

---

[115] Ibid., July 25, 1793. [116] Ibid., August 14 and 15, 1795.

[117] Morgan Edwards, Materials Towards a History of the American Baptists, in XII Volumes, Vol. II, Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in Jersey (Philadelphia: Printed by Thomas Dobson, 1792), p. 139.

[118] Christopher Marshall, Diary, March 16, 1788.

In a letter to Rev. Jedidiah Morse in Charlestown, Massachusetts, September 25, 1791, Palmer indicated that he was a Universalist as well as a Socinian:

> I have openly avowed the universal and Socinian doctrines. I believe them both, and think I can maintain them by conclusive arguments. The report that I left Augusta because I had embraced these sentiments is positively false,--the offspring of calumny and ill-nature. There are four universalists to one damnationist in the town of Augusta.--"I see not how you can deny Christ's deity and maintain the salvation of all men?"--In answer, let me ask you, whether you believe your Christ-God suffered in his eternal or human nature? I presume you will say that the eternal God of the universe was not hung on a tree by infamous Jews, or at least that his divine nature could not suffer. What good then does the union do? After all you get only a finite atonement. Besides it is making God resemble ourselves to put him into a body of clay. I would as soon believe there was no God at all as to believe he was such a childish being. Again you advise me to leave off preaching. Answer; do you believe that any but the elect will be saved? I know you do not. I therefore advise you to leave off preaching; for the elect will be saved at any rate, and you can't save any of the rest, if you should preach to all eternity.--You say likewise, that my doctrine is prejudicial to society. Answer. Tell a man that he

---

[119] Thompson Westcott, Life of John Fitch (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1857), p. 312; Scharf and Westcott, op. cit., II, 1404-1405; Abel C. Thomas, op. cit., p. 151; Richard Eddy, op. cit., pp. 304-305.

> shall be punished according to his crimes; or, if he be not elected that he shall be damned to all eternity, let him do what he will, which of these has the greatest tendency to good order in society?--You say, that I shall have the prayers of all praying people against my success. Let them pray on then, the God of the Universe is more immutable than to listen to their contradictory petitions. Light and liberality are gaining ground rapidly, and it must be something more than the prayers of superstitious mortals that will stop the progress of information.--On the whole, my friend, I will observe, that I cannot pursue the business of science with men of _any_ religion; but as to my own religion, I presume, if I ever change, it will be to a greater degree of _heresy_.[120]

Subsequently Palmer rejected Christianity completely insisting that organized religion was the product of ambitious, designing, and fanatic men who simply took advantage of man's ignorance. He saw the American Revolution as the beginning of republicanism in the age of reason when education and reason would replace religious superstition.[121]

In the years that Winchester preached at the Society, it grew rapidly and was well attended. After his removal to England in 1787, the growth of the Society tapered off. When the Society moved into their meeting at Masons' Lodge in 1785, most of the Society were former Baptists. Through the preceeding years the followers of Murray and those of Winchester drew closer together. A committee of four from the Universal Baptists invited all the believers in universal salvation to meet with them in Philadelphia in convention to unite in one general church in 1790. Subsequent to that meeting the Society of Universal

---

[120] Elihu Palmer, Letter to Rev. Jedidiah Morse, Sept. 25, 1791.

[121] G. Adolf Koch, Republican Religion: _The American Revolution and the Cult of Reason_ (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1933), pp. 63-68.

Baptists was disbanded and a new society called the First Independent Church of Christ, commonly called Universalists, was organized in its place.

The articles of faith which were adopted at the 1790 convention affirmed belief in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a revelation of the will of God and as a rule of faith and practice, stated belief in one God and one mediator, through whom God will finally redeem and restore the whole human race to happiness, and that the work of the Holy Spirit was to make sinners know the truth of salvation through the scriptures and to draw them into genuine holiness. The final article indicated the belief in the obligation of moral law as the rule of life.[122]

Dr. Benjamin Rush revised the rough draft of the articles and presented them for final approval.[123]

The Society was taking on more and more the complexion of the followers of Murray. In 1793 the meeting house was sold and the profits designated "only for the use of the Universal Baptists, or more properly the believers and professors of James Relly's union scheme, as their confession of faith indicates."[124]

At the time of the sale some of the members of the Society of Universal Baptists felt that they had been wronged when the property was sold and the funds taken by the new church. Christopher Marshall indicated that he was visited by Peter Barker who brough with him a statement signed by many of Winchester's followers protesting the action of the church.[125]

---

[122] "Articles of Faith," in the Register of the Universalist Church, Commencing 1801 (Compiled and written in March 1912 by Henry E. Busch), pp. 15-17.

[123] A. C. Thomas, op. cit., p. 36.

[124] Christopher Marshall, Diary, May 14, 1793.

Against Infidelity

The doctrine of restoration was viewed by Winchester as God's attempt to combat the rising tide of infidelity. God adapts his remedies according to the evils that are present in the world, Winchester said, and according to the capacities of men and their circumstances. Without the rise of infidelity Christianity might have gone on unexplored or unquestioned, but when men raise serious questions about the nature of the Christian faith it must be defended. God has given restoration for that purpose.[126]

Winchester cautioned that deism, infidelity, and atheism would destroy both religion and liberty. Therefore, he said, "Let America beware of infidelity, which is the most dangerous enemy that she has to contest with at present."[127] The way to combat infidelity, he said, was to investigate the truth. That required an inquiry into the principles of religion, liberty and government.

Orthodox Christians attacked the doctrine of Universalism because they believed it led to infidelity. Winchester insisted that restoration led men to righteousness, while eternal punishment opened the door to licentiousness, infidelity and superstition. So long as men believed they could do nothing about their salvation, that it was entirely in the hands of God who could by his whim save or damn, there was no real point in endeavoring to do the will of God. On the other hand, when one believed that he would be punished according to his sin he would endeavor to lead as good a life as possible so that his punishment would be minimal.[128]

---

[125] _Ibid._, August 5, 1793. [126] _Dialogues_, 1799, p. 132.

[127] _A Plain Political Catechism_, pp. 69, 79-80.

Winchester saw infidelity as a challenge to religion and to liberty. If they trample the laws of God under their feet, he said, they are not apt to have regard to the laws of men. Infidels insist that revelation is not to be received as authentic unless it is given immediately to each person and that unless it is so received they are not bound to obey it. When this is extended to the realm of government it has the same effect. None are, therefore, obliged to obey the laws of the country unless they were personally present when the laws were passed and consented to them. Such reasoning would utterly undermine the principles of government. "If the Bible be thrown aside, the principles of liberty will probably be soon forgotten, and disregarded." A look at the various nations of the world would show that tyranny and arbitrary government arise wherever the scriptures are set aside or unknown.

Those who deny the truth of the Bible are to be looked upon as enemies of religion and morality and of good order and free government.

---

[128] The Mystic's Plea, pp. 11-12; The Seed of the Woman, pp. 15-16.

In particular, he pointed to France and Robespierre. Liberty is God's gift from heaven while infidelity is born of hell and is a monster that destroys free society.[129]

What constitutes an infidel, he said, is not someone who has a different opinion about some point of doctrine, but one who rejects divine revelation.[130]

In a sermon given to young people in Philadelphia, Winchester cautioned them to beware of infidelity by insisting on the truth of revelation.[131]

Winchester's primary attempt to combat infidelity was his Ten Letters to Tom Paine. In the Age of Reason Paine had attempted to undermine the doctrine of revelation and to substitute reason. The principles of natural religion, Winchester said, are essentially the same as those of revealed religion. Moreover, they can be learned so much more easily and rapidly by a study of the scriptures than through the study of nature. If a man spent a thousand years studying creation he could find out nothing more than he might have learned in an hour by reading the scriptures.[132] Paine could write about the Bible in the way he did, Winchester insisted, because he really didn't know or understand what the Bible was all about.

Christians ought not to be too distressed by the rise of infidelity, for God was using it to help destroy the tyranny of popery in France and when he had finished using it he would utterly destroy it. For all the claims made for deism, Winchester said he never was able to find any deists who found that their religion really worked.

---

[129] A Plain Political Catechism, pp. 70-73. [130] Ibid., p. 77.

[131] Elhanan Winchester, An Address to the Youth of Both Sexes in Philadelphia (N.p., n.d.), p. 3.

[132] Elhanan Winchester, Ten Letters Addressed to Mr. Paine (Boston: Printed and Sold by John W. Folsom, 1794), p. 14.

> By all ever I could learn, hear or observe, respecting Deists, their religion is not sufficiently powerful, to enable them to pay that homage to their Creator, which some of them confess to be his due, nor to correct those vices in themselves, which they acknowledge ought not to be practiced, nor to support any uniform character of benevolence towards men in general; and especially, Deism is not capable of giving that satisfaction, comfort, peace, joy, and assurance to its professors as christianity is....
>
> I have often wondered, what could induce Deists upon their own principles, to be so zealous to propagate their opinions! They would rob us of our hope, joy, comfort, and assurance; and what can they give us in return? nothing but darkness, doubt, uncertainty, fear, anxiety, faint hopes, and despair.[133]

---

[133] Ibid., pp. 102-103.

CHAPTER IV

SPREAD AND REACTION AMONG BAPTISTS

Philadelphia

The influence of Winchester, Murray, and other Universalists affected clergy and laymen alike in the Philadelphia area. Among the seven ministers present at the Universalist Convention held in May, 1790, at Philadelphia, six were former Baptists. In addition to John Murray, the six were David Evans, former deacon at the Baptist church at New Britain and now a Universalist minister, Duncan McClean, a former Baptist minister of Virginia, and from New Jersey, Moses Winchester, half-brother of Elhanan Winchester and pastor of the Seventh Day Baptist congregation at Cohansey, Artis Seagraves of Cape May, William Worth of Pittsgrove, and Nicholas Cox of Kingwood.[1] Worth was chosen moderator and Seagraves, clerk of the Convention. These pastors and their churches lived through the difficult and painful experience of seeing their churches divided over the doctrine of universal restoration.

David Evans had been converted to Universalism in 1785, following the federalism of Relly. After his conversion to universal salvation, Evans helped establish a Universalist church in New Britain. In November, 1785, Evans published his sermon General Election, or,

---

[1] Abel C. Thomas, op. cit., p. 34.

Salvation of All Men Illustrated and Proved. Murray was so impressed that he read Evans' sermon to his congregation at Gloucester on August 25, 1786. Richard Eddy considered Evans "the keenest and ablest Rellyan in the country," while Abel Thomas ranked him with Hosea Ballou.[2]

Evans believed that all men are saved by union with Christ who made complete satisfaction of God's justice. The sins of all men are laid on him. The sovereign purpose of God is the election of man. His sovereignty is expressed not only in the creation of man but also in appointing him for salvation. In an interesting interpretation of Genesis 3:15, Evans indicated how God extended his election to all men. Satan was allowed to bruise only the "heel" of Christ. All of those who are bruised with sin constitute the "heel" of Christ. That included Adam and his posterity. Before the foundation of the world, God has chosen and elected all the "heel" of Christ. Satan has bruised the "heel" of Christ but Christ the "seed of the woman" has bruised the head of the serpent; that is, Christ has overthrown Satan's purposes.[3]

All men are guilty of breaking the law of God through sin and are under the curse of the law. Since all men are guilty they are provided life in Christ through the gracious all-embracing love of God.[4]

---

[2] Richard Eddy, op. cit., p. 276; Abel C. Thomas, op. cit., p. 53.

[3] David Evans, General Election, or, Salvation for All Men Illustrated and Proved (N.p., 1786), pp. 4-8.

[4] Ibid., pp. 9-11.

The love of God is universal, absolutely unchangeable. It was always God's purpose to save all men. Evans makes interesting use of the doctrine of particular election. Particular election, he said, was to be the channel through which God worked. The elect were chosen to witness to the glory of salvation in Christ Jesus. From among the whole body of the elect some are chosen to believe in Christ in this life. These are called vessels of honor and glory. Others are permitted to continue in unbelief in this world and will be punished accordingly. Their punishment, however, will be confined to this world. Despite the fact that he taught that punishment is confined to this world, he also suggested that there might be a punishment after death. Unbelievers will be cast into utter darkness and everlasting punishment, but that state shall last only until the true knowledge of Christ becomes universal and all things are restored.[5]

New Jersey Baptists suffered more from the growing Universalist movement than the Philadelphia churches. By 1790 four of the fifteen Baptist ministers in New Jersey had become Universalists. Universalism found its way into at least eight of the twenty-four churches.

In the annual letter to the Philadelphia Association, the church at Cape May complained of religious disturbances in the church and asked the Association for help:

> As to our affairs, they have been truly distressing, instead of peace among all, there has been great confusion by reason of some of our number, apostatizing from the truth, and giving heed to the

---

[5] _Ibid._, pp. 19-25

seducing teaching of universal salvation.[6]

Conflict over universal salvation began at a special meeting of the Cape May church on June 5, 1788. The purpose of the meeting was to determine whether or not belief in universal salvation should bar one from communion. That meeting which was attended only by those in sympathy with the pastor, Artis Seagraves, decided by unanimous vote that such belief should not be considered a barrier to communion. Subsequently, on August 9, at a regular meeting of the church to which all members were invited, the congregation considered whether it should be in communion with Seagraves since he had declared his belief in universal salvation. It was decided that no communion be held until after receiving advice from the Association.[7]

In answer to the church's query "Whether a member, who professes that Christ died for all mankind, and that every individual of the human race will finally be saved, ought to be excommunicated?" the Association "Agreed, That every such person, upon conviction, and after proper steps have been taken, ought to be excluded."[8]

At the October 25 meeting of the church hope was still held out that Seagraves would abandon Universalism. Seagraves was suspended from preaching until the second Sunday in June. Should he recant he would be allowed to return to the pulpit immediately.

---

[6] Cape May Court House Baptist Church, Letter to the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1790.

[7] Minutes of the West New Jersey Baptist Association (N.p., 1869), pp. 27-30.

[8] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 237.

By this time two parties had developed in the church with about equal numbers, each claiming to be the church, holding separate business meetings, and keeping their minutes in the same book. At a meeting held December 7, 1788, Seagraves' followers repudiated his suspension. In May the opposition party reaffirmed the suspension and refused to allow him to preach. After fruitless efforts to persuade Seagraves of his heresy, the church in December, 1789, excluded him. Seagraves' followers, who constituted a substantial minority, continued their efforts in his behalf, causing continuing discord and defection. In 1785 the church had reported a membership of seventy-two, but by 1802 the number was reduced to forty.[9] Morgan Edwards wrote of Seagraves: "He was much thought of at the Cape till he began to preach up the extravagant vagaries of the Rellites."[10]

The Pittsgrove church experienced a similar situation, culminating in the exclusion of the pastor, William Worth, and some of his supporters.[11]

The Philadelphia Association cited Seagraves and Worth for Universalism in 1789, and indicated that at the previous annual meeting there had been suspicions about Worth:

> As we had reason to fear, at the last Association, that Mr. Worth, of Pittsgrove, was far gone in the doctrine of universal salvation, we are well certified, by undoubted authority, that he

---

[9] Minutes of the West New Jersey Baptist Association, pp. 27-30.

[10] Morgan Edwards, Materials Towards a History of the American Baptists, II, p. 43.

[11] Pittsgrove Baptist Church, Letter to the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1790.

> is now fully in that belief. We, therefore, to show our abhorrence of the doctrine, and of his disingenuous conduct for a long time past, caution our churches to beware of him, and of Artis Seagraves, of the same place also, who has espoused the same doctrine.[12]

David Jones noted a conflict about universal salvation he had with Worth when he preached at Pittsgrove, June 7, 1790. In the course of an argument Worth "asserted that he believed that the Spirit of God sanctified men and women after Death, tho' they died in their Sins. But," Jones said, "he could produce no Scripture, when requested."[13]

At the request of the Cape May and Pittsgrove churches, the Association appointed Samuel Jones, Samuel Morgan of Middletown, William Van Horn of Scotch Plains, and Ezekiel Robins to write a letter of guidance to these churches.[14]

John Stancliff became the pastor at Cape May succeeding Seagraves. In August, 1790, he wrote Samuel Jones indicating that since beginning there he had baptized four persons, but the church was still being threatened by Seagraves and Worth, who continued preaching in Cape May and were subverting "the simple from the truth." He was astonished that God would allow such satanical preachers to go unrestrained. The main burden of the letter was to convince Jones to come to Cape May in September to help him combat the Universalists:

> Oh Dear Sir shall not we be as zealous for our God, who is the living and True God, as the Universalists are for their pretended deity of whom all our fathers, the apostles, and primitive saints, were ignorant of.

---

[12] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 247.

[13] David Jones, Register and Diary, June 7, 1790.

[14] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 254.

Stancliff concluded that Antichrist is losing ground in Europe and is endeavoring to succeed in America. Even though he did not send the pope, he sent the Universalists. Stancliff saw little difference between the purgatory of Roman Catholicism and the limited punishment of the Universalists.[15]

All of Worth's difficulties at the church did not stem from his belief in Universalism. The church was progressing well under his leadership until his interest in land speculation diverted his attention from the congregation.[16]

In 1784 Nicholas Cox had become pastor of the Baptist church in Kingwood. For five years he carried on an effective ministry. On April 3, 1789, he declared that he had adopted the doctrine of universal salvation. Cox was so successful in winning others of the congregation to his belief that the church found it necessary to take drastic action. On June 5, the church excommunicated him. So devastating was the experience in the life of the church that from that time until 1818 when David Bowen became pastor they received few members and had little regular preaching.[17]

The Philadelphia Association took particular notice of Cox at its annual meeting of 1790:

> This Association lament they have occasion to call the attention of that part of Zion we represent, to another awful instance of departure from the faith once delivered unto the saints. Mr.

---

[15] John Stancliff, Letter to Samuel Jones, Aug. 4, 1790.

[16] Abel C. Thomas, op. cit., p. 42.

[17] History of the Baptist Church at Kingwood (Trenton, 1833), p. 12.

> Nicholas Cox, late a brother in the ministry, having espoused, and artfully, as well as strenuously endeavored, to propagate the fatal notion of the universal restoration of bad men and devils from hell. As such, we caution our churches, those of our sister Associations, and Christian brethren of every denomination, to be aware of him.[18]

Cox became a Chauncian Universalist like Winchester.[19] He never served as a pastor among the Universalists, choosing to travel throughout Maryland and Virginia as a free lance evangelist.

The church at Hightstown was troubled with Universalism as early as 1785.[20] Charges were brought against Jacob Jemson and John Hight at the October 1, 1785 meeting of the church.[21] After due consideration it was decided that excommunication was called for, but such action was deferred until April of the next year when Jemson was excluded. Hight was not excluded because of the hope of his return.[22] On the last Saturday in January, 1789 Jemson's wife Rebeccah was called to account for her non-attendance. She confessed that she believed in universal salvation and was excluded by the church.[23] Hightstown had a long record of Universalist sympathy. In 1832, Margaret Blue was excluded from membership for professing belief in universal salvation.[24] Again in 1855 the church reported that some of the members "hold and teach that there is no future punishment of the wicked." After an investigation by a committee appointed for that purpose it was resolved that "Joseph Giverson be excluded from the fellowship of this church for holding and teaching doctrines subversive of the truth, in reference to the future punishment of the wicked."[25]

---

[18] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 256.

[19] Morgan Edwards, op. cit., p. 60.

[20] Minutes of the Hightstown Baptist Church, 1767. The minutes refer to Jacob Jemson being censured. "On the first Saterday in January the church met and thought fit to lay our Brother Jacob Jemson under sensure for not keeping his place in the church and afterward was excommunicated for error in doctrine." The original entry concluded after "keeping his place in the church." The phrase "and afterward was excommunicated for error in doctrine" was added later in another hand and different shade of ink. It may have been added after Jemson's exclusion in April, 1786.

[21] Ibid., October 1, 1785.

[22] Ibid., April 29, 1786.

The influence of the Murrayan Universalists appeared in the Middletown church. John Serjant was believed to have accepted the doctrine of universal salvation, but when questioned about it he refused to answer. He was temporarily suspended. At a later meeting upon being asked the same question he responded by saying that he did indeed believe in universal salvation and quoted several Scripture passages to support his belief. It is recorded that "He also denies that being born again or entering on the new birth are in nowise essential unto salvation." On Sunday, June 14, 1789 Serjant was formally and publicly excommunicated.[26]

In the Salem church a Mrs. Cook, when called upon to explain why she did not attend indicated that "she had considerable difficulty in respect to the universal doctrine in her mind."[27]

---

[23] _Ibid_., Last Saterday in January, 1789.

[24] _Ibid_., January 27, 1855.

[25] _Ibid_., February 3, 1855.

[26] Minutes of the Baptist Church of Middletown, N. J., August 2, 1788; June 13, 1789.

Another pastor took up the doctrine in 1793. Joseph Stephens was called to the pastorate at Upper Freehold in January, 1789 from the church at Flat River in Coswell County, North Carolina. In April, 1793 Stephens requested of the church a letter of reccomendation and dismission which was granted. However, at a special meeting in July, accusations were made against Stephens concerning belief in universal salvation. This had been conveyed to the church in a letter from Stephens in which he declared his faith. The church voted to suspend him from communion and appointed a committee to admonish him. It is evident that unlike Cox, Seagraves, and Worth, Stephens endeavored to remove himself from the situation rather than seek to convert the church to his doctrine.[28] Morgan Edwards said of Stephens, "He is another instance of a popular preacher who thinks he may be wiser than he is."[29]

The Philadelphia Association in 1793 warned the churches against receiving Stephens into membership or allowing him to preach, "being an excommunicated person, and holding the erroneous doctrine of universal salvation."[30]

Universalism appeared also at the Lyons Farms Baptist Church near Newark, in the person of Jotham Wade, who confessed to Sister Harriston that he believed in the final restoration of all mankind. A meeting was called for the church to decide whether any member professing universal salvation should be disciplined by the church. All but one, Abner Osborn, voted to support censure. A committee of four male members was appointed to call on Wade in the hope of reclaiming him.[31] When called upon to give its report, the committee indicated that despite its efforts Wade was "obstinately persisting still to retain the dangerous doctrine of general restoration with no probability at present to expect his return to his former declaration of our faith." The church then agreed unanimously to exclude him from membership. At that same meeting Thomas Murden was appointed to visit Abner Osborn to see why he had not been present at the last two communions.[32]

---

[27] Minutes of the First Baptist Church of Salem, N. J., February 19, 1791.

[28] Minutes of the Baptist Church of Upper Freehold, N. J., April 3, 1793.

[29] Morgan Edwards, op. cit., p. 108.

[30] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 293.

The climax took place at a meeting of the church on February 21, 1796, more than five months after Wade had first made known his heresy. Present at the meeting held at Elias Crane's were Peter Bryant, W. Ovington, Esther Mulford, Mary Harrison, Abbe Hood, Betsy Wade, and Pheve Congdon. Peter Bryant presented the letter of excommunication he had prepared, which after slight emendation was "unanimously" approved. It included instructions for the conduct of the church and its members in the case of excommunication.[33]

---

[31] Minutes of the Lyons Farms Baptist Church, October 4, 1795, October 6, 1795, in Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society (3rd Series, 1897), Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 61, 63.

[32] Ibid., February 7, 1796, pp. 119-20.

[33] Ibid., February 21, 1796, pp. 120-21.

> For as much as Jotham Wade of Connecticut's Farms has before us been convicted of holding and retaining the dangerous error of "final restoration of all mankind" to the dishonor of God and the great scandal of his church; and for as much as he hath hardened himself against rebukes, suspension, and admonitions; and thereby aggravated his sin, and obliged us the church to the use of the last remedy, we do therefore in the Name and with the authority of the Lord Jesus cut him off from the body of the church; put him away from us; and make him to us as a heathen and publican, whom we are bound to avoid, as much as may be, and keep no company with, no, not to eat--notwithstanding we are agreed joyfully to recognize the aforesaid Jotham Wade on a proper and publick renouncing of the above named error--this exclusion we perform as a gospel church, we believe, as warranted and directed by the Word of God. Amen.

After this declaration of the action of the church there follows a section reminding the members how they are to act in relation to the excommunicated Wade.

> Brethren! Hear how the Lord Jesus and his Apostles require you to conduct yourselves toward one that is excommunited--Matt. 18:17. "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and publican." or I Cor. 5:11. "Now I have wrote to you not to keep company with such an one, no, not as much as to eat." Romans 15, 17, 18. "I beseech you brethren to mark them which cause offences and avoid them; for they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ."--II Thess. 3, 6, 7. "Now we command you, brethren,...and have no company with him." This avoidance of all unnecessary familiarity and connection with him, is, you see, straitly commanded; "which observe and keep as your incumbent duty."

Among the thirteen members present and voting "unanimously" for the exclusion of Wade were three who themselves were subsequently excommunicated for "the dangerous error of general restoration," Betsy Wade, Thomas Lewis, and Abner Osborn.[34] The loss of the four members was a severe blow to the church for it had only a few members to begin with.

In 1784, John Murray had visited Jacobstown, staying as a guest in the home of John and Alice Brown. She was the daughter of a Baptist pastor, Rev. John Conrad, and a member of the Baptist church at New Mills (now Pemberton). Zealous Baptists, the Browns adopted Universalism but remained active members of the Baptist church until they could no longer keep silent concerning the universal doctrine. With several others from the church at New Mills, the Browns built a Universalist meeting house between Jacobstown and New Egypt, at New Hanover, in 1793, on a plot of ground donated by the Browns. The Rev. Abel Sarjent, the first of the Unitarian Universalist preachers, became the pastor of the newly established congregation.[35]

---

[34] *Ibid.*, April 3, 1796, p. 122.

Dr. William Rogers was among the first opponents of Universalism in the Philadelphia area. He had succeeded Morgan Edwards as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia in May of 1772. Rogers distinguished himself by being elected to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania during the war for independence, being appointed chaplain to the Pennsylvania militia. In 1778 he became a Chaplain in the continental Army. As a young man, Rogers was the first student at the new Baptist college at Providence, Rhode Island. In March of 1789 he was appointed professor of Oratory and Belles-Lettres in the College and Academy of Philadelphia. Three years later he was elected to the same professorship at the University of Pennsylvania. Rogers led the fight in the First Baptist Church against Winchester and finally succeeded in ousting him and maintaining control of the church for the orthodox party. Rogers is responsible for the publication by the church of An Address From The

---

[35] Abel C. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 189-94.

Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, to Their Sister Churches. An Address was prepared by the church in order to explain what had happened during the conflict there at the church.

In 1782 David Thomas endeavored to answer Winchester's sermon The Seed of a Woman. His answer entitled The Novelty of Novelties Examined claimed that Winchester's teachings were contrary to the scriptures. He argued that Winchester's account of the creation and the fall of angels was extra-biblical, for there was no mention of Lucifer in Genesis. Further, Winchester had said that his account was an attempt to explain what the scripture meant when it said that the earth was without form and void and in darkness. Thomas insisted that his explanation was unwarranted by the scriptures.[36] A second charge made by Thomas was that Winchester's doctrine leads to licentiousness, because it denies the fury, wrath, or anger of God. Following Winchester's plan men are free to follow all of their inclinations without ever having to fear being called to account for their misdeeds. This, Thomas insisted, was depriving mankind of the strongest barrier against sin and removing one of the strongest motives to religion and virtue:

> . . . was this brilliant notion universally embraced, what shocking effects may we not suppose would naturally follow thereupon? As corrupt as our world is at present, 'tis doubtless a heaven, in comparison of what it would soon become! What depravity of manners! What detestable villanies, would quickly burst out from this invenomed source of every abomination![37]

Winchester taught that sin is not imputed to the rest of mankind because of Adam's sin. Rather sin is a part of finite nature. Thomas strongly objected to this, supporting instead the federal theory in that in Adam all men are made sinners. He insisted that sin was infinite not finite.[38] Thomas objected to Winchester's assertion that the restoration began with the revelation to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15, and is propagated by ordinary generation to all mankind. He refused to accept Winchester's teaching that Christ is incarnate in every person.[39]

---

[36] David Thomas, The Novelty of Novelties Examined (Philadelphia: Printed for the author, 1782), p. 4.

[37] Ibid., p. 12.

In concluding the Seed of the Woman, Winchester listed five propositions which he said needed to be answered in order to counteract the effectiveness of his teaching of the restoration doctrine. The first of those was that God is love, essentially and communicatively. Thomas replied that God is love and if men refuse to accept his love he still loves them though he punishes them as his enemies.[40] To the second and third propositions, which said that God designed men for his happiness and that his design could not be frustrated, Thomas answered that as free agents man could respond in obedience to God, but regardless of what men do, God's purposes are not frustrated.[41] The fourth proposition was that Christ died for all and therefore his death was not in vain. Thomas agreed, but said if men refused to accept this remedy they must expect to suffer for their refusal. Even if thousands of persons are lost, the efficacy of Christ's death would not be destroyed. If a sick person rejected medicine to make him well it did not prove the prescription was not effective.[42] The fifth proposition was that Christ would ultimately destroy all sin out of hell. That notion Thomas utterly rejected, as well as the notion that Christ descended into hell to preach to the souls there.[43] Lacking further agruments, Thomas concluded with a lengthy emotional outburst:

---

[38] Ibid., p. 13.

[39] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

[40] Ibid., p. 24.

[41] Ibid., p. 25.

> It is, doubtless, by the superior documents of this _inherent Preacher_ that the children of this generation are grown so much wiser than their _Fathers_. The author might have spared this vehement ejaculation for the poor _deists_; for who but this supreme _Pontiff_ taught them to espy so many glaring blemishes in divine revelation? And indeed he is daily teaching others the noble sciences of self-conceit, and the contempt of serious piety, conformity to this world, scoffing at religion, crying up the dignity of human nature, despising the gospel, vilifying its faithful Ministers, and pride, and wantonness, and atheism, and infidelity, and profaneness of every kind. And now he has brought forth a lesson, which, if it does succeed, will do the whole effectually. Rejoice, ye sons of Belial! shout loud, all ye children of disobedience! for that eternal _hell_, at which you used to be terrified, which frequently checked you in the jovial career of vanity, that restrained your corruptions, and often, often embittered your mirth, and mingled wormwood with your golden cup of pleasure, that eternal _hell_ is now no more! It is found at last to be nothing but a melancholy fiction, an idle dream, meer priestcraft, and nothing else!
>
> Rejoice, ye devils, also! Yea, let all your dark dungeons resound with the voice of jubilation! No longer need you to believe and tremble! No, no, -- Wait but for a moment, and your iron chains shall burst asunder! Your prison walls, though of adamant, shall be broken down! Your seraphic wings shall be restored! You shall regain your primeval velocity, and in the twinkling of an eye reach your former habitations! This is a joyful proclamation indeed! But, whatever some men on earth may do, I am persuaded there is not a single devil, or damned spirit in hell, that pays the least credit thereunto. They, alas! they all know that it is an egregious falshood![44]

---

[42] _Ibid._, p. 25.

[43] _Ibid._, p. 26.

[44] _Ibid._, pp. 35-36.

In 1789, Caleb Evans published his treatise on atonement Christ Crucified; or, the Scripture Doctrine of Atonement Briefly Illustrated and Defended. In that work Evans is primarily concerned with the ultimate union of justice and mercy so that neither is elevated over the other. When justice over-balances mercy the result, Evans said, is cruelty to the guilty. On the other hand when mercy excludes justice the result is cruelty to the innocent. Therefore, justice must not suppress mercy or mercy overturn justice. There is no room for the teaching of Universalism which in effect is the overturning of justice by mercy. In the crucifixion of Christ justice and mercy are perfected. A proper view of the atonement provides mercy to the innocent and justice to the wicked.[45]

In times of real trouble and need the Association made it a habit to call upon the Rev. Samuel Jones, the pastor of the Lower Dublin Church, from 1762 to 1812. Some Baptists considered him "the ablest and most trusted leader among the ministers of the Association during this period."[46]

The minutes of the Philadelphia Association say nothing about the development of Universalism after the reference in 1781 until 1789 when William Worth and Artis Seagrave were cited as having adopted the universal doctrine. In 1784 the minutes did carry a reference to what the Association believed was the possibility of deism in the Rev. David Jones, minister of the church at Great Valley. Although the Association had been at the point of expelling Jones, the minutes of 1786 indicate that he was officially continued after acknowledging fully the deity of Christ.[47]

---

[45] Caleb Evans, Christ Crucified; or the Scripture Doctrine of the Atonement Briefly Illustrated and Defended (Bristol: Printed by William Pine, 1789), pp. 197-199.

[46] A. H. Newman, A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1894), p. 279.

The minutes of 1790 contain a letter written by Dr. Samuel Jones opposing universal restoration. That letter was adopted by the Association to be its circular letter for the year 1790, in addition to the regular letter of the Association. After indicating that the work among the Baptists was prospering, Jones adds.

> We have, however, to lament, that there are some appearances, in two or three of our churches, of the leprosy of universal salvation, which, perhaps, the Lord may permit to spread, that they which are approved may be made manifest. But, then we see such an Achan, such a troubler of Israel, in the camp, we may well suspect the Lord has a controversy with us. It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves, to implore the divine mercy, and to do our endeavor to prevent the spreading of so dangerous a plague.[48]

As other opponents of the universal doctrine were careful to do, Jones indicated that there were two principle points of view held among the Universalists. Some teach that there is no punishment and no hell, that all good and bad men shall enter heaven immediately upon their death. Others teach that there is future punishment, but that all shall finally be released and enter heaven. Jones was not concerned with the first part because he said the scripture clearly indicates that there is a hell. He is concerned in the letter to deal only with the second position, that taken by Winchester. The second view, he said, is "more plausible, though not more true."[49]

---

[47] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, pp. 200, 218.

[48] Ibid., p. 257.

Four arguments are then proposed against Winchester's view of limited future punishment. First, Jones said, the scripture is clearly against it. The scripture teaches that there will be eternal damnation. The eternal duration of punishment of the wicked is expressed in the same words as eternal duration in general, the eternal duration of happiness of the righteous, and the eternal duration of God himself. Secondly, not only is the scripture against it but there is no scripture for it. He disputed the passages cited by the Universalists. His third argument said there can be no scripture to support the universal restoration because that doctrine would only do harm. It would be impossible for such texts to exist because they would be contrary to those speaking of eternal punishment of the wicked. Such texts would not only be useless but also dangerous. "If the wicked were ever to be released from hell, time enough to let them know if after they get there, and not before, to encourage them in sin."[50] The difference in psychology is apparent at once. Winchester saw limited punishment as a motivation for good, Jones saw it only as an excuse to do evil. In his zeal to protect the Association from the heresy of Universalism, Jones was treading on dangerous ground concerning the doctrine of revelation when he wrote "If there was any passage within the lids of the Bible that gave information of a release from hell, we might be sure, such a text could never be the word of God."[51] The final argument used by Jones was that even if universal salvation had the possibility of being true it would be safer to reject it because if one based his hope on universal salvation and it proved not to be true he would be terribly disappointed. Those who reject that doctrine, however, even if it were true would enjoy the benefits of it though they were mistaken. He concluded with the exhortation: "let us, therefore, carefully avoid a notion so unscriptural, so useless, and at the same time so dangerous."[52]

---

[49] Ibid., p. 258.

[50] Ibid., p. 259.

David Evans answered Jones in *A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Jones: Containing Some Remarks on the Circular Letter of the Philadelphia Baptist Association*. Evans mentioned specific objections Jones had raised and tried to answer them. Jones said Universalism teaches there is no hell. Universalists do not believe in a "local or elementary hell", said Evans. Hell is not a place. It is a state of existence. Universalists teach that sin will be punished in the torment of hell until men are saved by an inward revelation of the absolute love of God in Christ. Those who die in unbelief will not have that inward revelation until the fullness of time when God gathers all things together in Christ.[53]

Jones objected that the Universalists do not take the scripture seriously when it teaches about hell-fire. The notion of hell-fire is not to be considered in a literal sense, according to Evans. It means that men are sinners, that atonement must be made before God can accept them, and that men cannot make the necessary atonement. Sinners are doomed to damnation, or the destruction of their unbelieving self. Damnation is a state of intense unhappiness, guilt, suspense and fear. This is a very real hell in which sinners must remain until the spirit of truth causes them to know Christ loves them.[54] The logic of Evans' argument is that since hell is not a place and sin is punished in this world, hell is a present reality which the sinner is experiencing while he awaits redemption in Christ.

---

[51] *Ibid*., p. 260.

[52] *Ibid*., p. 260.

[53] David Evans, *A Letter to the Rev. Doctor Jones; Containing Some Remarks on the Circular Letter of the Philadelphia Baptist Association*. (Boston: White and Cambridge, 1791), pp. 1-3.

Another objection raised by Jones was that the sins of the world are not to be forgiven. To that objection Evans replied that since no new thought can arise in God, forgiveness has been a part of God's plan from eternity. Jones objected further that according to the scriptures punishment is eternal. Although we can use the same language to talk about God as we do to talk about man, Evans said, those words cannot mean the same thing because God and man are infinitely different. Although we can talk about eternal punishment in the same words which we use to speak of the eternal duration of God, we do not mean that man is punished as long as God endures, for nothing can have the same duration as God. Everything else must have an end.[55]

Jones had made the comment in the circular letter that to him limited punishment seemed more plausible than no punishment at all after death. Evans reacted strongly to that statement. According to the believers in limited punishment men are saved not by the atonement of Christ, but by their suffering in torment. It is a kind of self-salvation and not salvation by the grace of God at all.[56]

---

[54] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[55] Ibid., p. 6.

To Jones' assertion that it is better not to take a chance on believing in the restoration even though it might be a possibility, Evans replied that not to believe in restoration when it is taught clearly as a part of God's love and grace would indicate that we do not seriously believe the atonement of Christ. If I am to be saved from your hell which is a place, Evans asked, what must I do? If Christ suffered for my sin then I have nothing more to do. If you say I must believe and obey to be saved then you mean that Christ was not sufficient to save me. It is rather my believing and obeying that saves me. That would be to deny the Calvinist principle that God saves.[57] To the charge by Jones that Universalism was licentious, Evans replied that the charge is disproven by the lives of those who believed the doctrine.

At the association meeting in 1793, Samuel Jones was called upon to write a letter to the Danbury Association questioning them concerning their tendency to the heresies of Universalism and Arminianism as indicated in their circular letter of 1792. Again in 1795 Jones was called upon to write the association circular letter on the Gospel. Here he emphasized the Calvinist doctrine of particular election arguing that salvation is not conditioned by man nor is it intended for all. There are some, he said, who teach universal salvation and conditional salvation but both those doctrines are to be rejected in favor of God's unconditional salvation of the elect.[58]

---

[56] Ibid., p. 7.

[57] Ibid., p. 9.

Oliver Hart was appointed to preach the opening sermon at the Association meeting of 1783. Preaching on the subject "An Humble Attempt to Repair the Christian Temple, Hart enumerated the duties of ministers: preaching, ministering gospel ordinances, governing the church, visiting the sick, comforting the saints, reproving vice, and finally he added "refuting of errors and heresies." He called upon the pastors of the Association to stand firm against all false teachers.

> Shall they sit down with folded hands while the enemy is making inroads in the church? Shall they tamely stand by--look on and see the foundations of religion sapped? Can they bear that the spouse of Christ should be poisoned with damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, and make no attempt to prevent the infection? God forbid, that any of the Lord's servants should be so unfaithful! Rather let them labor to build up the church of Christ by preaching, praying, disputing and writing for the defence of the gospel. Yes! and if called to it--rather seal the truth with their blood.[59]

The eminent Baptist historian, Rev. Morgan Edwards, was accused of falling prey to the universal heresy. John Rippon who succeeded the famous Dr. Gill as pastor in London, wrote to James Manning, the president of Brown University, May 1, 1784, referred to Winchester's role in the revival in New England in 1780 and said he had heard that Winchester had adopted the doctrine of universal restoration. He had also heard that Morgan Edwards had come out in support of Winchester. He asked Manning whether or not it was true that Morgan Edwards wrote to vindicate

---

[58] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 312.

[59] Oliver Hart, An Humble Attempt to Repair the Christian Temple (Philadelphia: Printed by Robert Aitkin, 1785), p. 23.

Winchester.[60] Manning's reply to Rippon, dated August 3, 1784, indicated that Edwards had not vindicated Winchester, but had read to him a manuscript that he had written on the subject of universal restoration about a year before. Manning advised Edwards not to have it printed because it would add to the "long list of imprudent things which had already so greatly grieved his friends and so injured his reputation."[61]

Although we are uncertain of all the things which comprise that long list of imprudent things, we are sure that one of the important things which made Edwards suspect was his opposition to the Revolution. He is said to be the only Baptist minister in America who opposed the Revolution.[62]

Edwards had been born in Wales and educated at the Bristol Baptist College. After preaching for nine years in Ireland, he went to England where he preached for a year. It was not until 1761 that he came to America and assumed the pastorate of the First Church, Philadelphia. It is not surprising that his loyalty was to the English crown. Because of the opposition to his Royalist sentiments, Edwards was forced to give up regular preaching in 1771.

When Edwards died in 1795 William Rogers preached a discourse on Edwards at the First Baptist Church. The theme was II Corinthians 6:8, "By honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true." Rogers listed the many contributions which Morgan Edwards made to the work of the Baptists in America. He went on, however, to talk about Edwards' less fortunate aspects: "Evil reports also fell to his share; but most of these were false reports, ... and even the title of Deceiver did not escape him. Often he has been told that he was an Arminian, though he professed to be a Calvinist; that he was an universalist in disguise."[63]

---

[60] R. A. Guild, op. cit., pp. 374-375.

[61] Ibid., p. 378.

[62] A. H. Newman, op. cit., p. 279.

David Benedict also comments on the charge of Universalism which had been laid against Edwards: "The charge of Universalism brought against him was not altogether groundless; for though he was not a Universalist himself, he professed a great regard for many who were, and would sometimes take their part against the violent opposers, in order to inculcate moderation."[64] With feeling running high on the subject of Universalism, there was little room for moderation which could in any way be construed as favoring that doctrine.

John Leland, who with Isaac Backus, was considered one of the most important Baptist of the 18th century, was suspect when he traveled in 1783 with Elhanan Winchester. Leland had been converted under Winchester's ministry. Perhaps it was through his association with Winchester that he came to believe that it was not so important what truth the man held as the spirit which led him.

> Whether it is a blessing or a curse to mankind, it is a certain truth, that the theoretic principles of men, have but little effect

---

[63] John Rippon, The Annual Register of the Baptist Denomination, 1794-1797, p. 309.

[64] David Benedict, op. cit., II, 296.

> upon their lives. I know men of all the before-written doctrines that equally seemed to strive to glorify God, in the way which they conceive will do it the most effectually. It is no novelty in the world, for men of different sentiments, to stigmatize the doctrine of each other, with being pregnant, with dangerous consequences; but it is not the doctrine or system that a man believes, that makes him either a good or bad man, but the SPIRIT he is governed by. It is a saying among lovers, that "love will triumph over reason," and it is as true, that the disposition of the heart will prevail over the system of the head.[65]

Leland indicated that the doctrine of restitution had few if any adherents among the Virginia Baptists. He was concerned about the doctrines of fate, free-will, restitution, Arianism, Socinianism, and any other heresy that was abroad. His solution to the problem, however, was not to attack the persons who taught those doctrines but to endeavor to preach the gospel. In 1796 Leland wrote the circular letter of the Shaftsbury Association. In that letter he urged that they not be too disturbed by those who through their preaching may undervalue the atonement of Christ. What is important is that they trust in the atonement of Christ.[66]

Leland was one of the leaders in the quest for religious liberty among the Baptists. In his sermon preached on April 9, 1801, entitled "A Blow At the Root," Leland advised the ministers of Massachusetts who were so alarmed at the growth of infidelity in France and of its consequent influence in America that if they wished to stop the spread of deism they needed to remove the cause. Through the establishment of religion, Leland argued, the established ministers were giving support to the charges of the deists and others that Christianity was ineffective. By renouncing the establishment and support of ministers by the state they would have a better chance to convince people that Christianity can stand on its own merit. In so doing you will:

---

[65] L. F. Greene, The Writings of the Late Elder John Leland (New York: Printed by G. W. Wood, 1845), p. iii.

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 231.

> . . . contribute more to the destruction of Deism, than all the arguments of Leland, Locke, Addison, Steel, Tennys, Wesley, or Gill; or of those later writers, Watson, Winchester, Ogden, and the Mendon Association, etc.[67]

New England

Universalism swept through New England in the 1780's, gathering some of its disciples from among the ranks of the Congregational churches, but drawing the vast majority of its disciples from the Separate Baptist churches.

John Murray had brought Universalism to New England during the previous decade. Born in Alton, Great Britain, in 1741, Murray joined the Methodists and became a friend of John Wesley and George Whitefield. Through contact with James Relly, the English Universalist, Murray was converted to belief in universal salvation. Upon adoption of Universalism his Methodist friends forsook him. In 1770 he set sail for America landing on the coast of New Jersey where he preached his first sermon at a meeting house which had been built by Thomas Potter near Good Luck. Potter had invited ministers of several denominations to use the meeting house, but was never satisfied with any of them. It was quite by accident that Murray preached there. The ship bringing Murray to America was blown off course and forced to put in a few miles north of Barnegat,

---

[67] "A Blow at the Root: Being a Fashionable Fast-day Sermon, Delivered at Cheshire, April 9, 1801," *Ibid.*, p. 253.

New Jersey. A shifting wind prevented the ship from further travel. Potter greeted the travelers who were forced to stay there. Upon meeting Murray, Potter declared that he believed God had sent Murray to preach there in his meeting house.

> The moment I beheld your vessel on shore, it seemed as if a voice had audibly sounded in my ears, "There, Potter, in that vessel, cast away on that shore, is the preacher you have been so long expecting." I heard the voice, and I believed the report; and when you came up to my door, the same voice seemed to repeat, "This is the man whom I have sent to preach in your house."

Murray indicated he could not stay to preach but would have to leave as soon as the wind changed. But, Potter declared, "The wind will never change, sir, until you have delivered to us, in that house, a message from God." The wind did not change until after Murray had preached there on Sunday, September 30, 1770.[68]

Leaving Good Luck, Murray preached along the coast of Jersey and then in New York, eventually making his way to New England. He continued to preach to many who felt like Potter that this was the man God had sent. Because of his friendship with Wesley and Whitefield he was widely received. He was quite successful among the Separates and gathered a strong following. Having established himself, Murray began preaching his true sentiments. It was not until 1779, however, that he established the first Universalist church in America in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Murray's preaching continued to attract followers who converted to universal salvation through his magnetism.

Adam Streeter, Baptist minister in Cumberland, Rhode Island, became a Universalist in 1777 or 1778. Little is known about him except for the fact that he ordained Caleb Rich. Born in Sutton, Massachusetts, in 1750, Rich moved to Warwick, Massachusetts, in 1771 and joined the Baptist church there. After a long struggle, Rich converted in 1778 to the doctrine of universal salvation, continuing to preach his Calvinist, New Light doctrines in combination with his newly adopted belief. Since 1775 Rich had been preaching in Richmond, New Hampshire. Now he left his Separate Baptist connection and organized Universalist societies in Warwick, Richmond, and Jaffrey, New Hampshire. Rich was a Rellyan Universalist and later followed the Unitarian position of Ballou.

---

[68] A. C. Thomas, op. cit., p. 21.

The church at Charlton was disturbed by the universal doctrine. In response to the Charlton church's question about universal salvation, the Warren Association replied that it was to be viewed as a "damnable heresy."[69]

In 1782 Thomas Barns, minister of the Calvinist Baptist church at Jaffrey, went out of curiosity to hear Caleb Rich preach. Barns was converted to Universalism and began preaching in the area, gaining reputation among the Universalists. When Murray's congregation at Gloucester wanted another preacher, Barns was invited. He filled the pulpit there from the spring of 1794 until the winter of 1799 when he accepted the call of a young congregation at New Gloucester, Maine, where he remained until his death in October, 1816. During the years in Maine he preached at Norway, Falmouth, and New Gloucester regularly. In addition, he preached in the adjoining towns of Livermore, Turner, Danville, Freeport, and Poland. In January, 1812, he was ordained at Gray over the united societies of Norway, New Gloucester, Falmouth and Gray. The Eastern Association of the Universalist church was organized in Gray in October, 1799.[70]

---

[69] Minutes of the Warren Association, in their Meeting at Attleborough, September 7th and 8th, 1779.

Among those who were deeply disturbed by Murray's successes was Isaac Backus. Writing in his diary in 1778, he referred to the fact that Murray was preaching in the area and causing many to turn away from true religion to follow him: "John Murray has again been here of late preaching up universal salvation with much art and eloquence and had many followers, but as to true religion, people are exceedingly stupid about it."[71] Consternation grew as the Baptist ranks were invaded. By 1781 many Baptist churches had lost members to Universalism.

Backus came out of the Separate tradition and had become a leader among the Baptists. He emerged as the chief opponent of Universalism among the Baptists in New England. Born of Congregational parents, Backus was converted during the great revival in 1741 and subsequently joined the Congregational church at Norwich, hoping to reform it on pre-Halfway Covenant lines. Unable to effect the reform he felt was so necessary, and depressed by the coldness and formalism of the Norwich church, with several others he joined in forming a Separate church. For a few years discussion ensued concerning infant baptism and baptism by immersion, resulting in an agreement to accept both practices. However, tensions soon arose and grew worse. Backus himself became convinced of the truth of believer's baptism by immersion and was baptized in 1751. Five years later Backus declared that he now believed that a true church must be composed only of believers baptized upon the profession of their faith. Armed with this conviction he organized a Separate Baptist church at Middleborough, where he remained as pastor for fifty years.

---

[70] Richard Eddy, op. cit., pp. 515-516.

[71] "Isaac Backus Diary, October 25, 1778, quoted in William G. Mc Loughlin, Isaac Backus and the American Pietistic Tradition (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967, p. 175.

Throughout his ministry Backus devoted his energy to meeting four major threats to the Separate Baptists: Shakerism, Methodism, Freewill Baptists, and Universalism.[72]

In an effort to combat the growth of Universalism, Backus wrote a tract in 1782 entitled, The Doctrine of Universal Salvation Examined and Refuted. This was an attack upon James Relly and Elhanan Winchester. Undoubtedly, Backus felt compelled to confront Winchester because two years earlier he had given a strong recommendation to the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia, commending Winchester for his demonstrated ability during the revival in New England that year. Backus believed there were only two possible positions on universal salvation and they were espoused by Relly and Winchester. By speaking out against them he was striking out at all other exponents of Universalism, including Murray and Charles Chauncy, Congregational pastor in Boston whom Backus believed was responsible for the anonymous publication in August of 1782 of Salvation For All Men. Backus was particularly distressed by the number of ministers who fell prey to the teaching of Murray and Chauncy. He complained not only that many had adopted universal salvation, but also that the other ministers continued to have fellowship with them.

---

[72] Alvah Hovey, A Memoir of the Life of the Rev. Isaac Backus (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1859), p. 301; see also Isaac Backus, A History of New England, 2 vols. (2nd ed.; Newton, Mass.: Published by the Backus Historical Society, 1871), II, 248-49.

At the close of 1782, Backus wrote in his diary:

> The doctrine of salvation for all men had spread so far in our country, that I thought it my duty to write against it . . . . In August, a pamphlet in favor of that heresy was published at Boston; in which Dr. Chauncy is judged to have a leading hand, and most of the ministers in Boston appear to favor it. In August also a second edition of Relly was published at Providence. These things have helped to shake down establishments by human laws.

Basing his opposition to Universalism on Locke's argument for private property, Backus argues that since God is the owner of the universe and all its inhabitants including the devils in hell, it was God's prerogative to do whatever he willed with his creatures. Moreover, instead of crying out against God because of this, men should praise him for his goodness in not consigning all men to eternal punishment.[73]

Backus recognized that there were many differences among the Universalists, but thought that essentially they followed either Relly or Winchester. His comparison is an attempt to clarify the two points of view; those who believed in no future punishment and those who taught a limited punishment:

> By comparing them together, an essential difference appears betwixt them, though tending much to the same end; for Relly builds

---

[73] Isaac Backus, The Doctrine of Universal Salvation Examined and Refuted, p. 37.

> upon an imaginary union with Jesus, but Winchester upon the benevolent nature of the Deity. Relly declares sin to be an infinite evil, deserving of infinite punishment; but Winchester treats it as a natural, and not a moral evil; as a calamity rather than a crime. Relly holds that salvation is already compleat in Christ, so as to exempt men from all future punishment; but Winchester denies the need of Christ's blood to appease any wrath in the Deity, and holds it as a medicine to purge away disorders in nature, which are so great as to require the sufferings of many ages before all will be removed. Relly rather takes it for granted that all men are in Christ, than attempting any fair proof of it; but Winchester states plain arguments upon it, and answers objections. Relly's scheme did not permit him to speak of salvation for devils; but Winchester's points thereto. Relly glories in his performance as a new discovery, of which he had not seen the like; but Winchester makes no such pretense, it being a collection out of mystic writers; and indeed it is in nature the same with the _philosophy and vain deceit_ of the second and third centuries which brought on the antichristian apostacy.[74]

Two things made Winchester's position attractive, Backus argued. Winchester assumed that neither God nor man act with bad intent towards others, and raised the hope that all mankind will be reconciled. Yet Winchester is wrong, because when man has done all he can there still remains "_enmity between the two seeds_."[75]

In addressing himself to some of Winchester's specific objections, Backus hoped to demonstrate the adequacy of orthodoxy to meet these recurring complaints. Winchester objected that a God of infinite love could not allow his creatures to endure eternal punishment. To this Backus responded that Winchester was substituting human imagination for the will of God. The scripture teaches us that God wills that some should endure endless misery, and all beliefs must be founded upon scripture. He further charged Winchester with giving pre-eminence to human reason rather than divine revelation.[76] Winchester must certainly have been disturbed at this. His belief in the universal restoration of bad men and angels was, he would have insisted, based upon the clear teaching of the scripture. His extension of the benevolence of God to all men was not based solely on a philosophical principle, but upon many texts he painstakingly cited and interpreted in his writings.

---

[74] _Ibid._, pp. 20-21.

[75] _Ibid._, pp. 26-27.

A further objection raised by Winchester concerned original sin. How can men be justly damned for not believing the gospel since they are sinners because of Adam's sin? Backus replied that God revealed his will to Adam and he has supernaturally revealed his will to men through many witnesses in many ages. Therefore, man is without excuse.[77]

Christ died for all is the teaching of the scripture. If Christ died for all, Winchester argued, how can those who received the benefits of his mediation be lost? The scripture says that all that is given to him he will keep, can any he has bought be lost? There is no good in this world which does not come from the merit of Christ, Backus answered, but the scripture demands that man do the will of Christ. Building on the argument from private property, he continued, that Christ can do whatever he chooses with mankind. Christ is not required to bestow the fruits of his merits on anyone. Moreover, "no pardon was ever promised to men who presumptiously and despitefully acted against the light."[78]

---

[76] Ibid., pp. 29-31.

[77] Ibid., pp. 31-33.

[78] Ibid., p. 37.

In turn Backus raised several objections which he wanted Winchester to answer. If men sin so horribly when threatened with eternal punishment, how can they be expected to act when the threat of punishment is removed? And if God is so benevolent why are not men better than they are? Backus believed that Winchester would not be able to reply to these questions because of the position he had taken before he had espoused universal restoration in which he argued against Universalism as tending to undermine morality.

> In July, 1780, I heard Mr. Winchester preach in Boston, from Rom. x. 4; when he spake against universal salvation, and observed, that if men ran to such horrid extravagances as they did, in times when it was not disputed but that such as died in sin would have endless misery, what would they do if they were taught that everyone should finally be saved? Among the many objections that he has now attempted to answer, I think he has passed this over in silence, which is no clear proof that he thought it could be answered. But if God is continually seeking to make every creature happy, why does he not do it? If obstructions thereto have arose that he did not foresee, where was his wisdom? If he foresaw them, and could not prevent them, where was his power? And if he could have prevented them, and did not, where was his goodness? A fair answer to these questions will settle the whole controversy.[79]

Backus insisted that if any one in the human race is lost, universalism must be false. He accused Winchester of not satisfactorily answering the question whether or not Judas is lost.[80]

The tract is concluded with an argument that many others were to use against the Universalists. If eternal punishment should not be true, those who believe it to be true are as safe as those who believe in universal salvation. But, if eternal punishment is true what of the risk those believing in universal salvation will have run?[81]

---

[79] Ibid., p. 36. See also Backus' letter to Jonathan Maxcy, March 17, 1797, in Alvah Hovey, op. cit., p. 353.

[80] Isaac Backus, Universal Salvation Examined and Refuted, p. 38.

Despite the hope that his tract would prove helpful, it failed to halt the move toward Universalism. Other Separate Baptist ministers and laymen continued to turn to Universalism. McLoughlin comments that "almost every Baptist church in New England reported some defections to this 'delusion.'"[82] The circular letter of the Warren Association for 1784, warned against the "numerous and dangerous errors that are abroad in the world."[83]

Among the ministers carried away by the universal doctrine were Gamaliel Reynolds, elder of the Separate church which Backus had helped form in Norwich, Connecticut, and Noah Murray, Baptist preacher in Lanesboro, Massachusetts. Having turned Universalist, Murray moved to Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, settling in Shawnee and then Athens. Rev. Moses Park was pastoring a small group of Baptists in nearby Sheshequin. Concerned for his congregation, Park challenged Murray to a debate. In the summer of 1793, the debate took place in the home of one of Park's deacons, Joseph Kinney. The debate began in early evening and continued until morning. By the time the debate was concluded both Park and Kinney had been converted to Universalism. Park immediately began preaching the new doctrine to the consternation of his friends. Four years later Park left Pennsylvania to settle in Ohio.

---

[81] Ibid., p. 40.

[82] W. G. McLoughlin, op. cit., p. 178.

[83] Minutes of the Warren Association, 1784.

In 1807, Murray became pastor of the Lombard Street Universalist church in Philadelphia.

The Baptist church at Grafton, Massachusetts, where Winchester had preached at the beginning of his ministry, was infected with the dreaded heresy. Zephaniah Lathe had been converted by Winchester's preaching in 1772. By 1785, Lathe had become a Universalist. Apparently the doctrine spread among other members, resulting in the Grafton church being dropped by Warren Association in 1788.[84] Edmund Pillsbury settled as pastor at Northwood, New Hampshire in 1779. About 1797, he, too, adopted the new doctrine.

Writing to the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stennett in England, James Manning remarked that during the early years of the American Revolution the Baptists had grown rapidly, only to be followed by the "delusion of Relly" propagated by John Murray with great success.[85] On August 3, 1784, Manning wrote John Rippon in England, that in general the Baptists were defending the faith almost alone against the Arminians and Universalists.[86]

The Danbury Association received a request from the Baptist church at Farmington concerning Universalism.

> Whether the doctrine of the Final Salvation of all Men, and the full and complete restoration of the whole Intelligent System, to a state of perfect happiness, in a voluntary subjection to the moral government of God, is to be deemed a Heresy; and that such as profess to believe it, are to be

---

[84] *Ibid.*, 1788.

[85] R. A. Guild, *Early History of Brown University*, p. 363.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 379.

> excluded from the fellowship of Christian Churches, in the ordinances of the gospel?

The answer was a strong and emphatic, "Yes!"[87]

It was the practice of each Association to send a report and circular to other associations and, above all, to send them to Philadelphia, the parent association. The letter of 1792 from the Danbury Association was felt by some at Philadelphia to lean toward Universalism. Samuel Jones was appointed at the annual meeting of 1793, after the reading of the Danbury letter, to write to the Danbury Association expressing the misgivings of the Association. There were some who wanted to sever relationship immediately because of the letter.

The Danbury letter dealt with the offer of salvation to all men. Arguing from an Arminian point of view, the letter said that salvation is offered to all men. All that keeps them from salvation is their own unwillingness to accept God's gift. Christ offered himself as a ransom for all and is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. The atonement is not "necessary, in order to purchase the love and favour of God to be exercised towards sinners;" for God gave his son because of his love. The letter added that atonement was necessary to lay the foundation on which God could grant pardon and eternal life.

The part of the letter which probably disturbed the Philadelphians most was that section which suggested God could, if he so chose, offer salvation apart from saving faith.

---

[87] Minutes of the Danbury Association, 1792.

> Surely it would be impious, in any, to say, that God could not, in justice give a law, which should be binding upon his creatures, unless he should also give them a heart whereby they should be willing to obey it. And just as impious and absurd it is, to say, that the deity cannot offer salvation to sinners in and through Christ, unless he should also give them a heart whereby they should be willing to come to Christ and receive salvation.[88]

The response which Jones wrote outlined some of the main points of the Danbury letter and endeavored to answer them.[89] Your letter, Jones said, indicated that the atonement of Christ is extended to all as a free gift. Moreover, you suggested that man has the natural ability to repent and that being possessed of that natural ability is sufficient ground for offers of salvation, even though man is destitute of moral ability. Jones asked, if man is destitue of moral ability, how can he be saved unless God simply wills it? Jones further took exception to the assertion that God offers salvation to all. How is that possible, since God knows that none of them will receive him until he makes them willing? Besides, God has determined not to do this with many of his creatures.

The two main points of concern, he said, are the extent and universality of the atonement. They border on the heresies of universalism and free will, "the one inconsistent with the other, and both with the word of God."

To say that Christ died for all means it was God's intention that all should be saved, Jones continued. If Christ paid the penalty for the sins of all, answering the demands of justice, then those in hell must be guiltless. But, he insisted, God has redeemed, not all men, just his people. Salvation is unconditional. To make it conditional upon the free will of man robs God of his sovereignty and glory.

---

[88] Ibid.

[89] Samuel Jones, A Letter Addressed to the Danbury Association (Philadelphia: T. S. Manning, 1826). A manuscript copy of the letter at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania bears the date March 30, 1794. The date and several additional insertions were apparently added later.

Jones concluded his letter with a brief summary of the atonement. Man fell into sin and became guilty, polluted, depraved, and helpless. God in his mercy provided salvation to some but not to others. The saved are made holy in this life and happy in the life to come. The process of salvation in the sinner proceeds like this: quickened by God the sinner awakes to his guilt, asks what he must do to be saved, and repentance unto life is given him.

The president of Rhode Island College (Brown University), the Reverend Jonathan Maxcy, was accused of being sympathetic to Universalism. Maxcy was a broad-minded man and endeavored to inculcate in the students at Rhode Island College the same virtue. In a charge to the graduates of the college, September 4, 1793, Maxcy cautioned students against being led astray by the great names of the infidels, reminging them that Christianity had as great or greater names. He also cautioned them against bigotry, urging them to keep an open mind:

> The more you examine, the more reason you will find for deferring an absolute decision respecting particular systems of religion; the more room you will find for charity, and consequently more for true religion.
>
> As soon as men fancy themselves infallible, imagining that God smiles on them, and frowns on their neighbors, they exclude charity, and commonly good manners.--You will do well to remember, that men's characters are not ascertained in the fight of God by

> the particular sentiments they adopt; For many men, who have very bad heads have very good hearts.[90]

The next year in his address to the graduates, Maxcy exhorted them to form their faith directly from the scriptures and not to become attached to particular systems of thought. He advised them not to be afraid of philosophy for the age in which they lived was indeed the age of reason and philosophy which are only governed by God.[91]

Taking the advice which he had given his students seriously caused Maxcy to get himself into difficulty with his fellow ministers. The furor that surrounded Maxcy was occasioned by the republication in 1796 of his funeral sermon preached at the death of the first president of Brown University, James Manning.

Preaching on the theme in I Corinthians 15:22, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," Maxcy asserted that the death that Adam brought upon man was natural death not spiritual death. When Christ abolished death it was natural death and not spiritual death that he overcame. He argued that spiritual death was not threatened at all as punishment for eating the forbidden fruit. The sentence that Adam received was that he should return to dust. He was threatened with the loss of his existence.[92] The passage could not mean spiritual death because through spiritual death the sinner becomes more disobedient and, therefore, more guilty. If God had meant spiritual death, then redemption could not have been possible because by suffering spiritual death man could not satisfy divine justice. The more man experienced spiritual death the more sinful he would become.[93] Christ took man's place to liberate him and to satisfy the justice of God by suffering the punishment of sin. Christ could not have suffered spiritual death because that makes the heart sinful and Christ was sinless. If the death referred to by Paul was natural death it would help to interpret the doctrine of future rewards and punishments in harmony with the resurrection of all men by Christ. This is the controversial part: "the scriptures are full of this important idea, that Christ died for all men, and that by virtue of his resurrection all shall be raised to life."[94] Maxcy declared, "every one of the human race will be rescued from the dominion of the death denounced against Adam."[95]

---

[90] "An Address Delivered to the Graduate of Rhode Island College, at Commencement, September 4, 1793," quoted in John Rippon, op. cit., 1790-1793, p. 560.

[91] Jonathan Maxcy, "Address to the Graduates of Rhode Island College, September 3, 1794, in The Literary Remains of the Rev. Jonathan Maxcy (New York: Published by A. V. Blake, 1844), pp. 301-02.

[92] Jonathan Maxcy, "A Funeral Sermon Occasioned by the Death of the Rev. James Manning, D.D., July 31, 1791," in op. cit., pp. 159-61.

If it was understood that the death imposed by the death of Adam was spiritual death, then it would be reasonable to presume that all men would be restored to immortal happiness.[96] It is clear that Maxcy was not a restorationist. His sermon went on to point out that men needed to be freed from natural and spiritual death. Those freed from both natural and spiritual death would be happy in the future life. Those freed only from natural death would be miserable because they were under the influence of sin. Those who believed that the death introduced by Adam was temporal, spiritual and eternal, should, he said, if they were consistent believe in universal salvation.[97]

---

[93] Ibid., p. 161.

[94] Ibid., pp. 162-63.

[95] Ibid., p. 164.

[96] Ibid.

If the sermon caused a great deal of protest, how much more the preface in which Maxcy compared Edwards and Hopkins with Priestley, Price and Winchester:

> Will the gates of Paradise be barred against these, because they did not possess the penetrating sagacity of an Edwards, or Hopkins? Or shall these great theological champions engross heaven, and shout hallelujahs from its walls, while a Priestley, a Price, and a Winchester, merely for difference in opinion, though pre-eminent in virtue, must sink into the regions of darkness and pain? I cannot induce myself to repose so small a share of confidence in the mercy of God, as to imagine, he will not pardon all the sincere errors of his creatures.[98]

Protests were received from Baptists in many corners. Isaac Backus demanded an explanation from his long-time friend, while endeavoring to quell the doubts that had arisen about Maxcy. Maxcy may have been sympathetic to Universalism but if so his sympathies soon vanished in the heat of the controversy. In his Discourse Designed to Explain the Doctrine of Atonement, Maxcy unequivocably stated his belief in endless punishment. The scriptures teach that the nature and duration of punishment and penalty of God's law is everlasting and endless, he said. From the testimony of reason he also concluded that endless punishment must be the penalty for divine law or else there would be no penalties at all. Any penalty attached to the law of God must be as great as the evil produced by the transgressor and must fit the demands of the good and rational universe.[99]

---

[97] Ibid., pp. 164-65.

[98] Ibid., p. 151.

Disciplinary punishment, he argued, would not vindicate grace but destroy it. Men must suffer according to their deeds because justice demands it. But the idea of disciplinary punishment to prepare us for the future state sets aside the necessity and the importance of Christ's suffering. We can be confident, he said, that salvation would be extended as far as would be consistent with divine benevolence and the good of the rational universe.[100]

Backus wrote Maxcy on March 17, 1797, about his supposed Universalism. Backus had known Maxcy for some years and encouraged him to enter the ministry. He also played an important part in the election of Maxcy to the position of president of Rhode Island College. He was, therefore, particularly concerned about this apparent defection to heresy. He wrote:

> When you published your opinion about the first sin of Adam, in a funeral sermon for President Manning, my heart was grieved. Dr. Rogers soon wrote to me about it from Philadelphia; but he afterwards informed me that when you were there, you satisfied him about it. And after you published your sermon on the 1st of Romans, Dr. Rippon wrote to me from London of a report which had reached there, that you had published a sermon upon universal salvation; but I informed him to the contrary, though the discourse wanted some peculiarities of Christianity. Judge then, how it must have appeared to me, last September, to see a new edition of your first sermon but also a preface to it, in which you set up a

---

[99] Jonathan Maxcy, A Discourse Designed to Explain the Doctrine of Atonement (Providence: Printed by Carver and Wilkinson, 1796), pp. 11-12.

[100] Ibid., pp. 37-39.

> Socinian and a universalist as high or higher in virtue than President Edwards.[101]

Commenting on Maxcy's favorable reference to Winchester, Backus suggested that if Maxcy had known as much about Winchester as he did, he would not have praised his virtue.[102] He was greatly disturbed. The fact that Maxcy could say anything good about Priestley who had denied the deity of Christ was scandalous in Backus' mind. Backus was heartened somewhat by Maxcy's subsequent Discourse on the Atonement. In response to Backus' inquiry, Maxcy wrote that he had been,

> grossly misrepresented, particularly with regard to universalism, a doctrine which I believe contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture. Some things which I have published were rash and imprudent. I am sorry for them, as they gave pain to those who were some of the first friends of the College. I shall be cautious in future.[103]

That Maxcy was endeavoring to clear himself of all suspicion is clear from his sermon preached at the Warren Association in September of 1797, on the theme "How Shall We Escape If We Neglect So Great Salvation," from Hebrews 2:3. Those who neglect the gospel, he said, will be destroyed. To destroy non-believers does not thereby cast reproach on God's mercy because all men deserve to be penalized for their sin. God is merciful in saving some.[104]

---

[101] "Letter to Jonathan Maxcy, March 17, 1797," in Alvah Hovey, op. cit., p. 352.

[102] Ibid., p. 353.

[103] "Letter to Isaac Backus, June 26, 1797," in Ibid., p. 358.

[104] Jonathan Maxcy, "A Sermon Preached at Boston, at the Annual Convention of the Warren Association, September 12, 1797," in The Literary Remains of the Rev. Jonathan Maxcy, p. 113.

Finally able to satisfy his questioners, Maxcy was reconfirmed in 1797 as president of the college.

Again in 1804, Universalism threatened the churches. This time in the person of Elias Smith, elder of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Smith had become a Baptist itinerant in 1788, and made a considerable impression. Thomas Baldwin, pastor of the Second Baptist church of Boston, and Samuel Stillman, pastor of the First Baptist church of Boston, took Smith as their protege. They groomed him carefully and persuaded him to accept a wealthy pastorate in Woburn, near Boston. Once there he grew in wealth and prestige, but at the same time felt himself rejecting the formalism of the churches. He launched an attack on Baldwin, Stillman, Hezehiah Smith, pastor of the church in Haverhill, and even Backus for being too cold and formal in their worship. Subsequently, he left the Baptists, urging pious Baptists to come out from this church which had lost its spiritual power. At about the same time he was reported to have adopted Arminianism and Universalism. Smith formed several congregations but did not succeed in getting a large following from the Baptists. He appealed to their pietism, but his Arminianism and Universalism checked that.[105]

In November, 1799, Smith's youngest brother, who had adopted Universalism, preached on that subject at Salisbury, New Hampshire, in the Baptist meeting-house. As the younger Smith discussed the inconsistencies of Calvinism, Elias began thinking about the doctrine of Universalism. He read Winchester's Dialogues and Huntington's

---

[105] W. G. McLoughlin, op. cit., pp. 216-20.

Calvinism Improved. Convinced that Calvinism was wrong, he concluded that Universalism was right. At the Congregational church at Boscawen, Smith preached twice on the doctrine of Universal salvation. Immediately repercussions started. Smith himself was embarrassed by the scriptures that he read which seemed to be against Universalism, as well as against Calvinism. He was a Universalist for a very brief time:

> I remained in it about 15 days, and was very unhappy through the whole....I found that my mind was still entangled with the old calvinistic doctrine, and that about all the difference between calvinism and universalism was in the number. One taught that a part were safe being predestinated; the other, that all were safe upon the same plan.[106]

Dissatisfied with both Calvinism and Universalism, Smith decided to drop them both. After singing a Psalm, he said he found his mind free of Calvinism, Universalism and Deism, "Three doctrines of men, which people love, who do not love holiness."[107] Smith indicated he had been troubled by all three of those doctrines off and on through the years.

In 1805 he decided in favor of the doctrine of the everlasting destruction of the wicked at the last judgment and rejected eternal misery.[108] He saw the everlasting destruction of the wicked as a means of converting many Universalists and Deists to Christ. Though he preached frequently at Freewill Baptist Churches and considered uniting with them, he did not do so. For his unorthodox preaching and teaching he was attacked by the Baptists, led by Samuel Stillman and Thomas Baldwin.[109] Although Smith claimed to have been a Universalist only for fifteen days, the Christian Messenger, January 13, 1821, carried a notice of installation of the Rev. Elias Smith on Wednesday, January 3, 1821, as pastor of the Third Universalist Society in Boston.[110]

---

[106] Elias Smith, The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels, and Sufferings of Elias Smith (Portsmouth, N. H.: Printed by Beck and Foster, 1816), p. 292.

[107] Ibid., p. 293.

[108] Ibid., pp. 347-48.

Advocates for Devils Refuted was written in England by William Huntington to counteract the spread of universalism there. It was subsequently republished in Philadelphia in 1796. A Universalist named Delanoe wrote a reply that is not extant in 1798. Rev. Ariel Kendrick, the Baptist minister in Woodstock, Vermont in 1798, wrote A Brief Reply to a Pamphlet Lately Published by S. Delanoe (under the fictitious name of 'Candor') in Favor of Universalism. Kendrick's reply indicated that the position taken by Delanoe was that of James Relly.[111]

That same year Rev. Samuel Shepard, pastor of the Baptist Church at Brentwood, New Hampshire, published The Principle of Universal Salvation Examined in an Epistle to a Friend. This work was apparently addressed to one who had formerly been a Baptist but had now become a Universalist. This Universalist, Shepard said, taught that sins and not sinners were to be punished. No clue to the name or location of the person concerned is given, however.[112]

---

[109] Ibid., pp. 362-64.

[110] Christian Messenger, edited by Abner Kneeland (Philadelphia: Printed for the proprietors, 1819-21), II, 95.

[111] Richard Eddy, op. cit., p. 505.

[112] Ibid., p. 506.

Several years later Elisha Andrews published A Candid Examination of the Moral Teaching of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation as Taught by its Advocates. Andrews, pastor at Templeton, Maine, argues that Universalism always led to licentiousness. That in itself, he said, was sufficient to make Universalism a dangerous heresy. It is strange that Andrews thought it necessary to refer to the Dunkers, whom Winchester had held up as an example of those who, believing in universal salvation, had nevertheless lived holy lives. In a sudden dose of casuistry, Andrews wrote:

> All this proves nothing to the point, one way or the other. It may indeed by said, "If the doctrine of universal salvation has an unholy tendency, why are not the Dunkers unholy, who universally hold to it?" To which it may be answered, "Perhaps they are; for that is not all virtue and piety, which have the appearance of them among men."[113]

Andrews argued that Universalism tends to lessen our fear and reverence of the deity and, therefore, to lessen our love for God. Andrews felt that the Universalists did not protect the divine character and authority of God. He was disturbed by the fact that the Universalists taught that God was not so much concerned for his own glory as for the happiness of his creatures.[114]

Not only does universalism lessen our love for God, but it lessens our love to Christ and hides the true glory of the gospel. Worst of all Universalism causes many to run into complete infidelity and lack of faith in Christ. Universalism, he said, is the way to infidelity.[115]

---

[113] Elisha Andrews, Candid Examination of the Moral Tendency of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation (Boston: Manning and Loring, 1803), p. ix.

[114] Ibid., pp. 11, 34-39.

South and West

Although John Leland said that there were few Universalists in Virginia, as early as 1787 the Baptists in Virginia found a Universalist among their ministers. In the letter received by the Philadelphia Association from the Virginia Association, 1787, a warning was given of a Duncan McClean, who had adopted the doctrine of universal salvation.[116] McClean was pastor of a Baptist church in Frederick County until 1786 when he became a Universalist. In 1790 he moved to Loudon County. In 1791 he accepted the call to the Philadelphia Universalist Church, but reconsidered and remained in Loudon County.

The Charleston Association of South Carolina wrote to the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1789 that things were progressing well in the Association, that they were opposing all heresies and regretted that Universalism was having such an influence in the Philadelphia Association. There were, however, several instances of Universalism throughout South Carolina. Susanna Summers was dismissed from the Bush River Church for refusing to renounce universal restoration.[117] The church at the Head of Enoree listed several cases of discipline because of universal salvation.[118] The Bethel Association in 1790 declared that it would not have fellowship with any members holding universal salvation.[119]

---

[115] Ibid., p. 104.

[116] Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 233.

[117] Leah Townsend, South Carolina Baptists 1670-1815 (Florence, S.C.: The Florence Printing Company, 1935), p. 164.

[118] Ibid., p. 215.

Universalism was centered principally in the New England and Philadelphia areas, but also found its way into the frontier. The Winchester brand of restorationism, called by many "Hell redemption," or "redemption from Hell," proved to be a problem from about 1791 to 1800. The chief leaders in the Kentucky Universalist movement were John Bailey and William Bledsoe, who were also the most influential preachers among the Separate Baptists. Bledsoe was excommunicated and subsequently rejected Christianity. Bailey was excluded from his church in 1791, but was subsequently restored on the basis of his promise not to preach restorationism, though he could continue to hold it as a private opinion. Bailey was disturbed by the divisions among the Universalists. The Calvinist and Arminian Universalists should stop fighting each other and unite against the other denominations. Despite strong opposition, Bailey reported, the Universalists were growing. By 1793 there were four Universalist churches, five ordained ministers, and several young candidates for the ministry. The Society of Universalists in Kentucky now numbered some two hundred members. Bailey added that there were many in other denominations who believed in Universalism but had not joined the society.[120]

The Baptist church at Hanging Fork apparently had felt the effects of Universalism, judging from the annual letter of the church to the Kentucky Baptist Association in 1799. The Hanging Fork church wrote and asked if those who had formerly adopted Universalism should be allowed to rejoin without expressly renouncing that doctrine. The Association advised that any who had been Universalists must renounce that belief before being readmitted to fellowship.[121]

---

[119] Ibid., p. 265.

[120] John H. Spencer, History of Kentucky Baptists, 2 vols. (Cincinnati: J. R. Baumes, 1885), I, 483f.

In the "Autobiography of Jacob Bower" further testimony to the influence of Universalism is found. Jacob Bower was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, of Dunker parents. At the age of nineteen he moved to Kentucky with his father. In 1812 he was converted and two years later began preaching. About 1826 he moved to Scott County, Illinois, because he did not want to bring his family up in a slave state. Most of his ministry was carried on in Illinois and Missouri under the auspices of the Home Mission Society. In the years 1832-1848 Bower traveled more than forty thousand miles, preached 2,931 sermons, helped organize fourteen churches, and ordained twelve ministers.[122]

Bower had a brief flirtation with Universalism. When he was six years old his mother died. The boy was quite attached to her and prayed that he might be with her when he died. Then he began to worry whether when he died he would go to heaven where she was. The weight of sin and the threat of punishment lay heavy on him. Some years later he recalled a baptism he had attended. After the preacher finished baptizing he began exhorting. Overcome with tears and not quite aware of what he was doing, Bower answered the call to salvation. It was expected that he would soon unite with the church.

---

[121] W. W. Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier: The Baptists, 1783-1830 (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931), p. 484.

[122] Ibid., p. 182.

Just at this time, however, he "fel into a snare of the fowler."

> One day a company was collected to repave the highway; and a certain individual who professed himself to be a Universalist, he and the old Judge had a long argument on the subject, each of them made two or three speaches in turn. I began to think that if Universalism was true, there is no need of being so much concerned about my situation, I hoped that all would be well enough at last, and began to grow more careless about religion. About this time, I went in company with some eight or ten others about thirty miles to a Universalist love feast, as it was called, I stayed among them (I think) three days & nights, the result was that I imbraced their sentiments more fully. I was taught to believe that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotton Son, who taisted death for every man, he came not to condemn the world, but to save the world, and that he would do it, and he would not louse one of Adams race, but he would save all." I came to the conclusion that, if all the world are to be saved, I certainly would be included, therefore I was sure of Salvation. This kind of wind blew off all my convictions and trouble about my unhappy state. I was rocked to sleep in the cradle of Universalism for a little more than five years.[123]

Bower told of falling in with the wrong company on a five months' work trip to Indiana. "During this period I learned more wickedness, than I had learned in all my life. I became an inebriate, and fell into many immoralities."[124]

However, when he did have those terrible times in which he was burdened with the sense of sin, he took refuge in his belief in Universalism, which gave him a sense of security. There were some moments when he still had doubts:

---

[123] Ibid., pp. 187-88.

[124] *Ibid.*, p. 188.

> And notwithstanding I had wrapped myself up so secure in the doctrine of Universal salvation. Yet at times it would cloud up, and lighten & thunder so sever from Sinais mountain, and cause me much uneasiness for days together. However, the suposition of being saved at last would quiet me again.[125]

In early October, 1811, Bower went to visit his father. While there he also called upon a Universalist preacher and from him he received much encouragement. When it was time to leave he became uneasy. As he parted his father gave him his usual counsel to promise to serve God and keep good company. Those words rang in his ears all day long. On the way home he stopped with his wife for the night at the home of a pious old Baptist, a friend of his father's. Something caused him to confide his fears in the old man, who exhorted him to trust God.

The next day as they started on their way they passed several large groups of Negroes. Curious, he stopped an old Negro and asked where they were all going. The Negro replied that they were going to see a servant hanged for killing a fellow servant. With great feeling Bower related what that experience did to him:

> I started on with this thought, how does that man feal, knowing that he must die today. Suddenly, as if someone had asked me. And how do you feal? You dont know but that you may die before he does. All of a sudden, (ah I shall never forget it) as if a book had been opened to me, the inside of which I had never seen: I got a sight of the wretchedness of my heart--a cage of every unclean and hateful thing. (ah thought I. here lies the root of bitterness, the fountain from whence all my sinful actions have flowed. My mind & heart have always been enmity against God, who is so holy that he cannot allow of no sin, however small it may appear in the sight of men. How can I ever be admited into heaven with such a heart? it is utterly impossible. Lost, lost forever lost. Right here, and at this time my crumbly foundation of Universalism gave way.

---

[125] *Ibid.*, p. 188.

> I discovered a just God, who, I thought, could not save me and remain just. I could see no way of escaping eternal punishment.[126]

Bower said that "Deists and Universalists in those days were scarce."[127] But he managed to find them. On one occasion he stopped at a house to get warm and in his customary missionary style asked if they needed any Bibles or Testaments. One of them answered, "Are you one of those Hell fire preachers, that goes pouring down hell fire & brimstone upon the people, and preach up Eteranl Damnation to a part of the humain family. We are all Universalist in this timber and you cannot sell us any of your Bibles."[128]

The Methodist itinerant, Peter Cartwright, mentioned the appearance of Universalism in Kentucky in the last decade of the eighteenth century. Some of the followers of the Rev. James O'Kelly, who left the Methodist church in 1792 and founded the Republican Methodist church, Cartwright said, became Arians, Universalists, and New Lights. A Dr. Beverly Allen left Methodism to become a Universalist, as did a Calvinistic Baptist preacher from Logan County.

The success of Universalism was short-lived. Cartwright indicated that the revival of 1803 which spread throughout Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Carolinas virtually drove Universalism from the land.[129]

---

[126] *Ibid.*, p. 190.

[127] *Ibid.*, p. 191.

[128] *Ibid.*, p. 224.

[129] Peter Cartwright, *The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright* (Seventeen Thousand; New York: Published by Carlton and Porter, 1857), pp. 28, 29, 39-40, 48.

After the turn of the century, Universalism decreased among the Baptists but that it continued to be a problem into the nineteenth century is clear from the autobiography of Jacob Knapp, Baptist itinerant preacher, who became famous for his protracted meetings. Knapp encountered Universalists in Tourin, Hannibal Center, Phoenixville, and Utica, New York, and in Hartford, Connecticut, Providence, Rhode Island, Boston, Lowell, Concord, and Marblehead, Massachusetts, and in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Knapp was an outspoken opponent of Universalism, in his strongly emotional pietistic preaching. Commenting on the Universalist movement in Utica, New York, Knapp indicated that the movement had a large congregation and published a newspaper. Shortly after his revival began, in which he "undertook to unmask the hypocrisy and expose the nakedness of the system," he reported that the Universalists sold their meeting house and the editor of the paper left the city. He said "they have not been able to accomplish much since."[130]

Not only are there many references to fighting Universalists in his Autobiography, his sermons also are filled with references to Universalists and infidels, which he grouped in the same category.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the impact of Universalism on the Baptists had lessened considerably and the orthodox position was being reaffirmed. The chief factors in the waning influence of the universal doctrine were the excommunication of those found guilty of heresy, the circular letters sent to each of the churches warning against Universalism, the control which the association exercised over the churches, numerous sermons, and the writing of many pamphlets and books. Perhaps more important than these was the effect of the revivals in Kentucky, Tennessee, the Carolinas, Connecticut and Massachusetts. In Connecticut and Massachusetts the revivals started in 1797 and continued until about 1801. During the revivals many Universalists were converted. Rev. Giles H. Cowles of New Cambridge indicated that prior to the revival more and more of the constituency were turning to Deism and Universalism. Now that tide of conversion was running in the opposite direction.[131] Between 1801 and 1803 revivalism swept through the Southern states, bringing a return of piety and zeal to the Baptist denomination.

---

[130] Jacob Knapp, Autobiography of Elder Jacob Knapp (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1868), p. 87.

Certainly the change in the Universalist church brought about by its deviation from a trinitarian to a unitarian theology caused many to turn away. With the development of Unitarian Universalism there was an increase in rationalism and a noticeable decrease in piety. Pietism had been one of the chief factors responsible for the Separate Baptists' response to the early Universalists.

---

[131] John Rippon, op. cit., 1800-1801, pp. 617-20.

CHAPTER V

CONTEMPORARY UNIVERSALISTS

That Winchester played a significant role in the spread of Universalism among the Baptists has been made plain for all to see. We must now turn our attention to determining his place in the broader universalist-unitarian movement of which he was a part. His relationships to contemporary universalists will be explored as well as his connection, if any, with their thought. It will also be apparent that his influence extended to other than orthodox Baptists, judging by the reactions to the gospel of the salvation of all men.

The Early Universalists

Universalism did not spring up spontaneously on American soil. Its roots were in Europe and England. Among those believed to have affirmed the doctrine of universal restoration prior to the time of Murray and Winchester, were Samuel Gordon who came to Boston from England in March 1636, Sir Henry Vane, Governor of Massachusetts in 1636, Joseph Gatchell of Marblehead, who was sentenced to the pillory and had his tongue pierced with a hot iron for asserting belief in the salvation of all men, George Rapp and Rappites who taught that though there was ultimate redemption and salvation for all mankind, only the celibate who also followed the teachings of Jesus would enter the kingdom without going through a period of probation and purification.[1]

Peter Bohler, pastor of the Moravian Church in Bethlehem, who later became bishop in America, and was second in rank only to Zinzendorf, was an outspoken advocate of universal restoration, as was Matthew Reuz. Before 1783 Reuz had preached at the Universalist societies in Gloucester and Boston. Israel Acrelius recorded a conversation with Peter Muller in which Muller indicated his belief in restorationism.[2]

Among the early Episcopalians there were some believers in the doctrine. Rev. Richard Clarke, rector at St. Philips Church at Charleston, South Carolina, taught and preached the doctrine of universalism before returning to England. After Winchester preached his sermon The Outcasts Comforted, Clarke had it republished in England in 1783. In Virginia, Rev. Robert Yancey, rector at Tillotston and Trinity parishes in Louisa County from 1768 to 1774, became convinced of Universalism around 1772 or 1773 and announced that he would preach a series of sermons on that subject. Unfortunately he was taken ill within several weeks of starting the series and died without ever returning to the pulpit. In Norwich, Connecticut, the Rev. John Tyler, rector of Christ Church became a Rellyan Universalist around 1782, and published six sermons in defense of Universalism entitled Universal Damnation and Salvation Clearly Proved By the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament in 1798. Thomas Rodney the diarist of the Continental

---

[1] Richard Eddy, op. cit., Chapter I, pp. 13-56.

[2] Israel Acrelius, A History of New Sweden (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1874), p. 387.

Congress pledged a tract of land and a gift of money to build a Universalist meeting house at Dover, Delaware, around 1776.[3]

In addition to the persons who early had adopted the doctrine of Universalism in this country a number of publications from Europe and England were circulated. Jeremiah White's The Restoration of All Things was republished in 1712. Siegvolck's Everlasting Gospel was published in America in 1753, and James Stonhouse's The Restitution of All Things, originally published in 1761, was republished in an American version in Philadelphia in 1770. In 1775 Conjectures Concerning the Nature of Future Happiness by Charles Bonnet was published in a translation from the French edition. Nearly twenty years later Ferdinand Petitpierre's Thoughts on Divine Goodness was republished in America. All of these authors were believers in the ultimate salvation of men through a period of disciplinary punishment which would result in the reformation of their character. This version of the doctrine of universal restoration was adopted by Winchester and his followers.

Shortly after he became a Universalist, Winchester had the opportunity to meet George DeBenneville who had emigrated from France in 1741 and settled near Reading, Pennsylvania, before moving to Germantown and then to Milestown, near Philadelphia. DeBenneville had preached Universalism in France and Germany after being converted to the doctrine by some extraordinary visions. Undoubtedly, Winchester's connection with DeBenneville strengthened him in his convictions. Winchester found DeBenneville's hand-written manuscript in which he had recorded his remarkable conversion and the persecution which followed it, eventually forcing him to flee his native country and come to America. Winchester translated it into English and published it in London in 1791.

---

[3] Albert Bell, The Life and Times of Dr. George DeBenneville 1703-1793 (Boston: Department of Publications of the Universalist Church of America, 1953), pp. 53-54.

During a fifteen-month period of illness DeBenneville had a remarkable vision which convinced him of the truth of universal restoration. Following his recovery he began preaching that all men could be saved and encouraged sinners to submit to God. Disturbed by his preaching, the French clergy called him to appear before them and explain his faith. Because he taught the universal salvation of all men, DeBenneville was imprisoned. Apparently others were hanged, whipped, branded, and their property confiscated for preaching that heretical doctrine. DeBenneville was condemned to be beheaded but was reprieved by Louis XV.[4] At that point he left France, went to Germany and Holland and then came to America.

Recounting his vision, DeBenneville said he felt himself dying by degrees, until exactly at midnight his soul was separated from his body and he was drawn upward as in a cloud and visited heaven. There the angels conducted him through the seven habitations of the damned, where he saw their terrible despair. Those who were sorrowful for their sins were separated from those who were not. After being refreshed, he was conducted into the presence of Christ and watched as all creatures fell down and adored him. DeBenneville was returned to the seven habitations of the damned but found no more darkness, despair, pain, torments, afflictions, or gnashing of teeth. All was now serene and he heard the angels sing, "An eternal and everlasting deliverance, an eternal and everlasting restoration, universal and everlasting restitution of all things!"[5]

---

[4] Elhanan Winchester (tr.), A True and Most Remarkable Account of Some Passages in the Life of Mr. George DeBenneville (London: Sold by the editor, 1791), pp. 21-22.

Following that experience he was conducted through the five celestial mansions of the elect where he talked with Adam concerning universal salvation before being returned to earth so that he could preach to mankind.

The second main stream of Universalism came to America through the teaching of James Relly, a former Baptist and Methodist in England. In 1759 Relly published his most important work, Union; or, A Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and His Church. Relly's doctrine of union was an extension of the federal theology. Union between Christ and his church is necessary for the harmony of divine perfections, he said. Union between Christ and mankind is necessary because of the truth that states that every man shall die for his own sin.[6] It is contrary to justice to afflict the innocent. Only union allows Christ to be punished for man's sin. To be consistent mercy cannot trespass the limits of truth and justice. But if Christ is united to the sinner truth and justice are not strained. God is infinite wisdom. There is no wisdom in imputing sin to Christ that he had no right to bear. Atonement apart from union would be contrary to love. The Father loves the Son. To punish the Son for crimes to which he had no relation would be a defect of love. It would show a greater love for the offender than for the Son.[7]

---

[5] Ibid., p. 33. [6] Deuteronomy 24:16; II Chronicles 25:4.

The union between Christ and mankind, according to Relly, was after the similitude of Adam. God created male and female in one person--Adam. God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam and separated the female principle from him by taking out a rib. This did not destroy the union of Adam and Eve. The Church existed like this in Christ.[8] The divine union is explained by the fall of Adam. Adam was not deceived, only Eve was, yet Adam voluntarily accepted her condition. Christ voluntarily accepted the condition of his Church:

> In like manner, _Christ_ the _husband_ was not deceived: but his _wife_, the _Church_, being deceived, was in transgression. Yet as the _union_ was such, that _Christ_ was not without the _Church_, nor the _Church_ without _him_ at any time; it was equitable for _her_ curse and condemnation to fall upon _him_. Withal, such was his love unto his _spouse_, that he voluntarily put himself in her condition, when he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, tempted in every point like her, that he might compassionate her ignorance and wanderings, and be touched with a feeling of her infirmities.[9]

As in Adam we are made offenders, in Christ we are restored.[10]

The New Testament shows this union in the example of the vine and the branches. This is a perfect picture of oneness and harmony:

---

[7] James Relly, _Union; or, A Treatise of the Consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and His Church_ (Philadelphia: Gihon, Fairchild and Co., 1843), pp. 12-13.

[8] _Ibid._, p. 14.

[9] _Ibid._, p. 15.

[10] I Corinthians 15:22.

> That once crucified, but now ever-living Body, of God our Saviour, preserves and secures our eternal life in its own: as the branch in the vine, or the exterior part of the natural body are preserved as living members, and live in the fountain life of the body, so all his children, as members of his body, live in the life, and unity of the same.[11]

In Christ all the punishments of the law have been executed. Man is exempt from punishment because of his union in Christ:

> Christ's righteousness is upon all his seed; by his single act, before they had any capacity of obeying after the similitude of his obedience, or of assenting to what he did or suffered. This manifests such a union to him, such an inclusion of the whole seed in him, as renders his condition theirs in every state which he passes through. Insomuch that his righteousness, with all the blessings and fruits thereof, is theirs, before they have known it, or ever were conscious of existence. Thus by the obedience of one are many made righteous.[12]

Like James Relly from whom he learned the doctrine of universal restoration, James Murray attempted simply to extend the Calvinist doctrine of predestination from the handful of the elect to all mankind. Adopting Relly's doctrine of union he said that all men having sinned in Adam incurred eternal damnation, but Christ bore the guilt and punishment of all who should be saved.

After learning of Winchester's conversion to Universalism, Murray wrote to encourage him in his preaching. Murray looked forward to meeting this former Saul. Unfortunately, Murray said he became a Chauncian Universalist. "Yet this shade of difference I conceived would operate as an effectual bar to his intercourse, or religious communion with me."[13] Murray and Winchester met in 1785 at the General Convention of the Universalists in Oxford, Massachusetts. Winchester preached first in his "mild, flowing, eloquent style."[14]

---

[11] James Relly, Salvation Compleated; and Secured in Christ, as the Covenant of the People (London: Printed by J. Davis, 1779), p. 12.

[12] Union, pp. 26-27.

The first time Murray visited in Winchester's home he found Winchester seriously ill, but commented that he anticipated pleasure and profit from knowing him.[15] He wrote of Winchester: "I admire him much; his conduct and expressions evince one of the best hearts I have known."[16]

Despite the early and friendly meetings, Murray and Winchester never were very close. Their differences did act as a bar between them. It was particularly Winchester's limited punishment that bothered Murray. Some time later as he described different kinds of Universalism he said:

> A second class of Universalists insist on purgatorial satisfaction, according to which, every man must finally become his own Saviour; For, if I must suffer as much in my own person, as will satisfy divine justice, how is, or how can Jesus Christ be my Saviour?
>
> If this purgatorial doctrine be true, the ministry of reconciliation, committed to the apostles, must be false--To wit, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses. In fact, I know no description of people farther from christianity, true christianity, than such Universalians.[17]

The only difference between the Methodists and Winchester, he said, was that Winchester said all men will pay for their own sins.[18] When he was asked about comparing his system to that of Winchester, Murray said that Winchester made men pay for their sins, but he relied on Christ.[19] He called Winchester's followers, "Pharisaical Universalists, Universalists who were willing to justify themselves."[20] Murray's theology was strict Rellyanism. Through the headship of Christ all men are included in the acts of Christ. On the cross Christ contained in himself the second Adam. As all men have in Christ died to sin, so they are already eternally saved.[21]

---

[13] John Murray, Letters and Sketches of Sermons (Boston: Published by Joshua Belcher, 1812-13), II, 342-343.

[14] Thomas Whittemore, The Life of Rev. John Murray (Boston: Published at the Trumpet Office, 1833), p. 258.

[15] Letters and Sketches, II, 344-345. [16] Ibid., p. 112.

[17] Ibid., p. 130.

A serious effort was made to refute Rellyanism. Isaac Backus insisted that in his doctrine of the union existing between Christ and man, Relly was attempting to fit God's justice and mercy into man's understanding of it. Like the deists he was putting reason above revelation.[22] The pastor of the Newport, Rhode Island church, Samuel Hopkins, wrote An Inquiry Concerning the Future State of Those Who Die in Their Sins, in which he saw Rellyan Universalism as an attack upon the holy government of God. Through the endless punishment of sin God manifests his divine perfection, he maintained.[23]

---

[18] Ibid., I, 348-349; II, 277.

[19] Ibid., II, 263.

[20] Ibid., pp. 358-359.

[21] James Murray, Universalism Vindicated (Charlestown: Printed by J. Lamson, 1798), pp. 15-17.

[22] Isaac Backus, The Doctrine of Universal Salvation Examined and Refuted (Providence: Printed and sold by John Carter, 1782), p. 4f.

In 1785 three attacks were launched in New England against the Rellyans. Although the purpose of these writings was to combat Universalism, out of it developed a new theory of the atonement, called the "governmental theory." Foundations for that theory were laid by the elder Jonathan Edwards, Joseph Bellamy, and Samuel Hopkins. The "governmental theory" of the atonement eventually replaced the penal satisfaction doctrine of the atonement which had been stressed in old Calvinism. More attention was given in the new theory to the benevolence of God and to his sovereignty than to appeasing divine anger.

The Universalists attempted to justify the doctrine of the universal salvation of all men on precepts which they took over from old Calvinism, which insisted on the literal infliction of the legal penalties and the literal satisfaction of divine vindictive justice. The Calvinistic Universalists simply extended the atonement from the elect to all mankind. It was the endeavor to provide a more adequate answer to Universalism which led to the formulation of the "governmental theory" of the atonement.

In his sermon, Eternal Salvation On No Account a Matter of Just Debt, John Smalley, Congregational pastor in Berlin, Connecticut, attacked the basic presupposition of the Universalists, that the death of Christ had made atonement and thereby satisfied justice. He admitted that the Universalists got their argument from the orthodox theologians who taught that as damnation was required so the salvation of the believer is required as God's absolute debt to the believer. In particular he cited Jonathan Edwards, Sr., and the venerable Thomas Hooker as chief exponents of this erroneous teaching.[24] The Universalists took the arguments of Edwards and Hooker on behalf of the elect and extended them to all mankind. Smalley argued that whoever received salvation received it completely as an act of grace, not an obligation of divine justice. Thus, the salvation of believers is the free gift of God's grace.[25] The following year Smalley published another sermon entitled None But Believers Saved, in which he continued his argument against salvation by the satisfaction of justice.

---

[23] Samuel Hopkins, An Inquiry Concerning the Future State of Those Who Die in Their Sins (Newport, Rhode-Island: Printed by Solomon Southwick, 1783), pp. 52, 146.

Jonathan Edwards, Jr., developed the "governmental theory" further in his Three Sermons on the Necessity of Atonement. Whereas the Rellyans insisted that atonement is based on divine justice, Edwards maintained that it was completely a matter of grace. The major part of the sermons deals with the nature of justice, using three senses of justice--commutative, distributive, and general or public justice. Commutative justice safeguards the property of man and is not involved in the pardon of the sinner. Distributive justice concerns the just reward of a man in relation to his character. In this sense of justice, the pardon of a man is wholly an act of grace because in pardon he is treated better than he deserves. General or public justice includes all moral goodness. To practice justice in this sense is to operate according to the glory of God and the good of the universe. This is really moral goodness, not justice at all, Edwards said.[26] Grace is only consistent with general justice which is really moral goodness. In this sense man is treated according to what is right. This is not really justice at all but divine grace since in this sense justice and grace agree.[27] The atonement applies only to the sphere of general justice. General justice and the glory of God required that God accept the substitution of Christ. God can accept the death of Christ because it supports the authority of his law and government and makes pardon consistent with the good of the universe and the glory of God.[28]

---

[24] John Smalley, Eternal Salvation On No Account a Matter of Just Debt (Hartford: Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, 1785), pp. 12-13.

[25] Ibid., pp. 20, 23, 26, 28.

The third person to share in the development of the governmental theory of the atonement was Stephen West. West followed the elder Jonathan Edwards as minister at Stockbridge, Massachusetts. In The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, Proposed to a Careful Examination, West argued that God's chief purpose was to maintain his government, which he said is exercised out of benevolence and love.[29] The atonement is intended to manifest divine displeasure with sin, to convince men of the righteousness of God, and to maintain his government by punishing sin.[30] God pardons because he freely wills to do so, not because he must, so that whether God bestows or withholds his mercy he is equally consistent with benevolence and justice.[31]

---

[26] Jonathan Edwards, Jr., "Three Sermons on the Necessity of Atonement," in E. A. Park, The Atonement: Discourses and Treatises (Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1859), pp. 6-7.

[27] Ibid., pp. 22-24.

[28] Ibid., p. 41.

[29] Stephen West, The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, Proposed to a Careful Examination (New-Haven: Printed by Meigs, Bowen and Dana, 1785), p. 28.

In *Brief Animadversions on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation*, Robert Annan rejected the notion of the transfer of merit in the Rellyan system. Merit and demerit, he insisted, are personal qualities and cannot be transferred.[32]

Despite the opposition, Murray continued to gain more followers. His style of preaching was very much like that of Wesley and Whitefield. Through the years he was probably the most effective preacher of universal salvation in America, and has been called by the Universalists the father of Universalism in America.

Universalist Congregationalists

Universalism existed among the Congregationalists before 1770, when Murray arrived in America. That brand of Universalism was wholly independent of Murray and his Rellyan theory of union. Charles Chauncy, a graduate of Harvard, 1721, was pastor of the First Congregational Church of Boston. Brought up in old school Calvinism, Chauncy was greatly affected by the rationalism of the Enlightenment. Imbibing the spirit of reason, Chauncy radically reacted to the emotionalism of the Great Awakening. With his younger colleague from the West Church, Boston, Jonathan Mayhew, Chauncy adopted the Unitarian point of view in relationship to the deity. A Socinian Unitarian, Chauncy stressed that though Jesus was the mediator he was subordinate to God. He was not deity but he was not either purely a human being. Chauncy carried his unitarian tendency and his belief in the benevolence of God to the logical conclusion--Universalism. His defection to Universalism caused as much consternation to Congregationalists as had Winchester to the Baptists.

---

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 145.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

[32] Robert Annan, *Brief Animadversions on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation* (Philadelphia: Printed by R. Aitken and Son, 1787), pp. 16-17.

About 1750, in the course of his study of the Pauline epistles, he adopted the doctrine of universal salvation. It was not, however, until 1782, when his tract the Salvation of All Men was published anonymously that Chauncy first made public his views on universal salvation. In 1784 the tract was republished under Chauncy's name. Though not published until 1782, it is believed that Chauncy had formulated and finished the tract at least by 1768, if not sooner. Over the years Chauncy's views were developed through the reading of John Taylor's Original Sin (1740), John Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, and Samuel Webster's A Winter's Evening Conversation upon the Doctrine of Original Sin (1757). Throughout Salvation of All Men he freely quoted John Locke, the Arian theologian William Whiston, and Samuel Clarke the rationalist philosopher and Arian. In the Preface he expressed his gratitude to John Taylor.

Chauncy's system of universal salvation was almost identical to that of Winchester. Happiness as the goal of all mankind is self-evident, Chauncy maintained, because it is natural.[33] Like Winchester, Chauncy taught a future punishment designed not to satisfy the demands of justice, but to transform men's lives.[34] The degree of punishment in the next state will be dependent on their sin in this life.[35] The extent of agreement with Winchester is shown in Chauncy's basic propositions. First, Jesus Christ is the one through whom happiness is attained by the human race. Second, that happiness is possible only through Jesus' obedience unto death. Third, Christ died not for a select number of men but for mankind universally without exception or limitation. Fourth, God's purpose is that all men should be saved. Fifth, God will, in this state or another, make all men willingly subject to his moral government. Sixth, all mankind is universally restored through the mediation of Christ.[36]

Later that same year Chauncy published *The Benevolence of the Deity*. In that remarkable work, Chauncy reflected many of the eighteenth century concepts such as sensational psychology, benevolence, optimism, and religious liberalism. Benevolence in the deity, he said, is that which prompts us to happiness. It is as essential to the nature of God as is the conception of his omnipotence and other attributes. When applied to God, benevolence must be understood in the same sense that it is used in terms of the moral goodness of men. The difference is only one of degree and not of kind.[37] Here Chauncy was trying to overcome the gulf in strict Calvinism between God and man which made human terms almost meaningless when applied to God.

---

[33] Charles Chauncy, *The Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations, Made Manifest by the Gospel-Revelation: Or, the Salvation of All Men the Grand Thing Aimed at in the Scheme of God* (London: Printed for Charles Dilly, 1784), p. 12.

[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11, 60.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 19ff, 51, 81, 166-167, 183ff, 193ff, 237.

Chauncy and Winchester were in agreement on the extent of divine benevolence. However, while Winchester endeavored to demonstrate it through the use of scripture, Chauncy stressed the naturalness of divine love. God's benevolence, he insisted, can be seen from his goodness manifest everywhere in the world. The inanimate and animate worlds declare his glory and goodness as do the intellectual powers of man of sensation, reflection, memory, discernment, imagination and abstraction. The moral powers of man which consist of his moral sense, his self determination and remorse or regret declare the goodness of God. God's providential care and redemption of man in Christ crown the goodness of God.[38]

Chauncy reiterated his belief that suffering in the future state is intended for the reformation of man's character.

> The plain truth is, the benevolence of the Deity, is not confined to particular beings, or orders of beings, but is absolutely universal; and ought, therefore, to be conceived of as exerting itself in those ways which are best adapted to advance the general good of the creation.[39]

---

[37] Charles Chauncy, The Benevolence of the Deity, Fairly and Impartially Considered (Boston: Printed by Powars and Willis, 1784), p. 17.

[38] Ibid., pp. 72, 97ff, 120ff.

[39] Ibid., p. 244.

Jonathan Edwards wrote a third treatise to combat Universalism in 1790, entitled The Salvation of All Men Strictly Examined. Edwards accused Chauncy of basing salvation on man's own merits through his teaching of future punishment leading to reformation of character. This same cry was raised against Winchester. Thus the satisfaction of justice takes the place of divine forgiveness.[40] Edwards further argued as he had in his Three Sermons on the Necessity of the Atonement, that nothing requires that punishment be for the good of man. It is sufficient for God to vindicate his law and government through the exercise of punishment.[41] In the last half of the work, Edwards endeavored on the basis of his governmental argument to show that endless punishment is really just despite the objections of Chauncy. The last section is simply a marshalling of scripture evidence to support the doctrine of endless punishment.

The Congregationalists were not alone in the endeavor to combat the growth of Universalism. In 1783 the First Presbytery of the Eastward published a book against Chauncy entitled Bath-Kol: A Voice From the Wilderness. The Presbyterians were threatened because as Bath-Kol indicates no sooner did Chauncy publish Salvation for All Men then many Presbyterian preachers began asserting it.[42] The work was intended as a warning against both Deism and Universalism which the Presbytery believed to be the root of all impiety. It was directed against John Murray and Rellyanism in particular.

---

[40] Jonathan Edwards, The Salvation of All Men Strictly Examined, pp. 1, 3, 11, 14.

[41] Ibid., pp. 48, 59, 73-74.

[42] Bath-Kol: A Voice From the Wilderness (Boston: Printed by N. Coverly, 1783), pp. 186-187.

Isaac Backus, too, raised his voice against Chauncy in the Atonement of Christ Explained and Vindicated Against Late Attempts to Exclude It Out of the World. Backus pointed to Chauncy as one of the chief opponents of the doctrine of atonement. In Benevolence of the Deity Chauncy had argued that self-determination, not atonement, is the basis of moral obligation. This can be seen and understood by an appeal to the sense perceptions of mankind. He said, "We feel the existence and operation of this power every day we live." If this were not so all religion, revealed or natural, would be a "senseless pretense."[43] Backus argued that Chauncy was guilty of setting up reason above revelation and even placing feelings above reason.[44]

Like his older colleague Chauncy, Jonathan Mayhew adopted a unitarian theology, but was far more outspoken than Chauncy. To the contrary, while Chauncy published two tracts dealing with universalism, Mayhew very cautiosly affirmed the universal doctrine. He did so as early as 1762 in his Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfection of the Divine Goodness. Like Chauncy, though he affirmed the doctrine of universal salvation he remained a congregational preacher. Mayhew believed that divine goodness is inseparable from divine wisdom and is regulated by it. "The goodness of God is not simply a disposition in nature to do good, uncontrouled, undirected by wisdom." It is not "a blind fondness, or mere instinctive benevolence: It is inseparably connected with reason, and under the direction of wisdom in all its operations."[45] In God, Mayhew said, there is no distinction between goodness and justice. Thus, punishment in the world is for the good of men. Mayhew calls the Calvinist doctrine of election of some to happiness and others to damnation "positive cruelty."[46] Like other Universalists of the Winchester type, Mayhew affirmed that punishment is to reform man and that punishment will continue in the world to come. He stated his faith in the full extent of God's goodness when he said:

---

[43] Charles Chauncy, Benevolence of the Deity, p. 137.

[44] Isaac Backus, The Atonement of Christ, Explained and Vindicated (Boston: Printed by Samuel Hall, 1787), pp. 4, 5, 8.

> A consideration of God's goodness and mercy, particularly as manifested in the holy scriptures, in the redemption of the world by Christ, naturally suggests very pleasing hopes, and the glorious prospect, with reference to the conclusion, or final result of that most wonderful interposition of grace.[47]

No clearer expression of his belief in universal restoration is needed than his conclusion to the sermon:

> But when we consider the declared end of Christ's manifestation in the flesh, --to give his life a ransom for all, and to destroy the works of the devil: When we consider the numerous prophecies respecting the destruction of sin and death, and the future glory of Christ's kingdom ON EARTH: When we consider, that he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet, the last of which is DEATH; and till he hath subdued ALL THINGS unto himself: When we reflect, that according to the Apostle Paul, where sin abounded, grace does much more abound; and that the same creature (or creation) which was originally made subject to vanity, is to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God:

---

[45] Jonathan Mayhew, Two Sermons on the Nature, Extent and Perfection of the Divine Goodness (Boston: Printed and Sold by D. and J. Kneeland, 1763, p. 15.

[46] Ibid., p. 35.

[47] Ibid., p. 89.

> When we consider the parellel which is instituted and carried on by the same apostle, betwixt the first and second Adam, in his epistle to the Romans; and his express assertion in another, that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order:" In a word, when we duly consider that there is a certain "restitution of ALL THINGS, spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began:" When we duly consider these things, I say, light and comfort arise out of darkness and sorrow. We may, without the least presumption, conclude in general, in the resolution of ages, something which is vulgarly imagined, shall actually be the result of Christ's coming down from heaven to die on a cross, of his resurrection from the dead, and of his being crowned with glory and honor, as lord both of the dead and of the living.--The word of God, and his mercy endure forever: Nor will he leave anything which is truly his own work, unfinished.[48]

Despite the efforts of West, Edwards, and Smalley, Universalism continued to attack Congregationalists. In the 1790's five Congregational clergyman in the western part of New Hampshire all became Universalists. Thomas Fessenden of Walpole; Jacob Mann of Alstead; Samuel Mead, who succeeded Mann in Alstead; Dan Foster of Charlestown; and a Rev. Taft of Langdon. In Vermont, Rev. Perley Howe of Surrey and Rev. Samuel Whiting of Rockingham became Universalists.

One of the strong Calvinist preachers in New England was Joseph Huntington, pastor at the First Congregational Church in Coventry, Connecticut, from 1763 to 1794. Shortly after Huntington's death in 1794, his manuscript Calvinism Improved was found and published. In that work he rejected the "governmental" or "New England theory" of the younger Jonathan Edwards and modified his Calvinism to take in Universalism. Isaac Backus wrote to his friend Thomas Ustick, referring to the death of Huntington in 1795 and his book on universal salvation:

---

[48] *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

> Dr. Joseph Huntington of Connecticut died last year, and left a book on universal salvation, which I hear they are about printing there. How popular has this doctrine grown? Though it strikes at the root of all true religion, as much as infidelity itself.
>
> But it has had an influence toward pulling down what men have called, their established religion in New England. Dr. Huntington has been a great leader therein. Thus God makes all things to work for the good of his children.[49]

Though distressed at the universalism of Huntington, Backus had some satisfaction in the fact that the Congregational churches were being attacked and that a great leader like Huntington should succumb to it.

In the introduction to Calvinism Improved, Huntington pointed out that he spent twenty years meditating on the doctrine before he accepted it. He had, he said, probably read all the writers on the subject of universalism from Augustine down to the present. Huntington's doctrine of Universalism was based on a federalism similar to that of Relly and Murray. In contrast to Winchester he insisted that sin is infinite since it is directed against an infinite God. If sin is infinite, he went on, punishment must also be infinite. Instead of rejecting the teaching of endless punishment in the scripture as Winchester and others had consistently done, Huntington affirmed that the scripture plainly teaches endless punishment, but just as plainly teaches that all men shall be saved.[50] Atonement was made to satisfy the demands of justice so that infinite love would be free to forgive. Atonement for Huntington is like that of Relly, the transfer of man's guilt to the account of Christ as the federal head and the transfer of Christ's merit to man's account. Since all guilt and righteousness are God's property he can freely transfer as he wills. The fact that God does choose to transfer it makes atonement a free act of grace.[51]

---

[49] Isaac Backus, Letter to Thomas Ustick, June 3, 1796.

[50] Joseph Huntington, Calvinism Improved (New-London: Samuel Green, 1796), pp. 45-48.

In response to Calvinism Improved, Nathan Strong, minister of the First Congregational Church of Hartford, wrote, The Doctrine of Eternal Misery Reconcilable with the Benevolence of God. Strong endeavored to refute all forms of Universalism. He opposed Chauncy and Winchester on the basis of their argument from the benevolence of God. Benevolence in God, he said, is not love of individual happiness, but of the happiness of society. The endless misery of part of mankind is consistent with divine benevolence because it promotes the general good.[52]

Strong was principally concerned with Huntington and the Rellyan system of universal salvation. To Huntington's assertion that the salvation of all was the expression of infinite benevolence, Strong argued that God's goodness and mercy can be infinite while individuals are unhappy. Huntington said that law carried death to all men and the gospel brought lift to all men. The gospel threatens death as well as the law does, Strong replied. There is no opposition between law and gospel as Christ clearly pointed out when he said he came to fulfill the law, not to destroy it. The impenitent will be judged, condemned and punished by the gospel as much as by law.[53]

---

[51] Ibid., pp. 109-111, 121.

[52] Nathan Strong, The Doctrine of Eternal Misery Reconcilable With the Infinite Benevolence of God (Hartford: Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, 1796), pp. 141-144.

As Universalism continued to spread into the turn of the century, Josiah Spaulding found it necessary to answer the Universalists in Universalism Confounds and Destroys Itself, published in 1805. Spaulding's lengthy treatise attacked the discrepancies in the systems of Relly and Huntington, Chauncy and Winchester and Petitpierre and Young. Those very discrepancies would destroy Universalism, he contended. Relly and Huntington were grouped together and Chauncy, Winchester and Petitpierre were placed in a second group. Against Huntington he argued it is just as consistent with the love of God to punish some and save others. Since Huntington rejected Winchester's purgatory-type punishment after death and taught instead that the impenitent are saved at death, the day of death becomes the day of salvation.[54]

Spaulding also directed his attention to the preachers of limited punishment. There is nothing significantly different in the Dialogues of Winchester from Chauncy's Salvation of All Men, he contended. To answer Chauncy would be to answer Winchester. Nevertheless he proceeded to answer Winchester. Winchester presents a contradiction between the grace of God and sinners suffering their due punishments, Spaulding said. The damned are forced to suffer according to strict justice. If salvation is all by grace then why is it necessary for men to suffer at all for their sins? If men suffer for all their sin, grace has nothing to do with it. There is nothing that remains to be forgiven. Suffering has atoned for all sin, not the death of Christ.[55]

---

[53] Ibid., pp. 205, 212, 214.

[54] Josiah Spaulding, Universalism Confounds and Destroys Itself (Northampton, Mass.: Printed by Andrew Wright, 1805), pp. 50-57.

Spaulding raised the same objection against Chauncy who said that men are required to suffer for their sin, though only enough to make them penitent. Like Winchester, Chauncy insisted that all men are saved by grace. But, Spaulding said, like Winchester he makes grace of no value. All the Universalists who teach limited punishment run into the same problem, said Spaulding, the fact that there is no grace at all involved in man's salvation.[56]

Universalist Unitarians

During his years in England, Winchester became acquainted with Joseph Priestley. The friendship between Priestley and Winchester was interrupted because of Priestley's removal to America. Priestley had served as a non-conformist pastor for nearly thirty years in England. He was pastor at New Meeting in Birmingham during the time of the Birmingham riots of 1791. The riots were led by those who were opposed to the French Revolution. Priestley who had expressed sympathy for the principles of the French Revolution found his chapel burned, his home broken into, and his furniture, library, and scientific equipment destroyed. Forced to flee Birmingham during the riots he lived in London until 1794. It was probably while Priestley was in London that Winchester met him. Early in 1794 Priestley sailed to America, arriving in New York on June 4, and in Philadelphia on the 19th of June.

---

[55] _Ibid._, pp. 125-127, 134-135. [56] _Ibid._, p. 145.

In mid-July he moved to Northumberland, Pennsylvania, where he remained until his death in 1804.

Because of his important scientific contributions, the University of Pennsylvania elected him professor of chemistry, but Priestley turned down the position.

During his years here the thing which seemed to give him the most pleasure was his contribution in helping to organize the First Unitarian Church in Philadelphia. The church was organized on June 12, 1796, and Priestley was invited to be the pastor. This, too, he refused to accept preferring his life in Northumberland. Priestley wrote of the Unitarian Church: "I do not know that I have more satisfaction from anything I ever did, than from the lay Unitarian congregation I have been the means of establishing in Philadelphia."[57]

When Priestley came to Philadelphia he was not happily received by the orthodox. Unitarianism was subject to violent attack and Priestley was the main object. It was virtually impossible for him to find a place to preach. In a letter to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, June 17, 1795, he wrote: "On the whole, I am satisfied that I can never appear at Philadelphia, as a Unitarian preacher."[58]

The Rev. Dr. William Rogers, former pastor of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, and professor at the University of Pennsylvania, was visibly shaken by the presence of Priestley in Philadelphia. A Mr. Bakewell gives us Rogers' reaction to the appearance of Priestley:

---

[57] Joseph Priestley, "Memoirs of Dr. J. Priestley to the Year 1795 Written by Himself, with a Continuation by his Son, J. Priestley," in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley: Theological and Miscellaneous Works, Vol. I, Part II, p. 352.

[58] *Ibid.*, p. 306.

> I went several times to the Baptist meeting in Second Street, under the care of Dr. Rogers. This man burst out, and bade the people beware, for "a Priestley had entered the land;" and then, crouching down in a worshiping attitude, exclaimed, "Oh, Lamb of God! how would they pluck thee from thy throne!"[59]

For his conduct on this occasion, Rogers was reprimanded by the American Philosophical Society of which he was a member. After this incident, Rogers and Priestley became close friends. Priestley frequently visited in Rogers' home.[60]

Priestley was still casting about for a place to preach when he learned that the Universalists were building a meeting house. In a letter to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, written June 24, 1794, in which Priestley had asked Lindsey and Belsham to help him to locate people to establish Unitarian societies in New York and Philadelphia, he also told them about the Universalist meeting house that was being built and indicated that some of his friends proposed to help furnish money to finish the building and engage the use of the meeting house for Sunday mornings.[61]

A subsequent letter to Lindsey, February 12, 1796, indicated that Priestley had the day before preached the sermon at the opening of Winchester's meeting house. That first sermon was attended by a number of members of Congress meeting in Philadelphia.[62]

---

[59] Ibid., pp. 263-264. [60] Ibid., pp. 264-265.

[61] "Letter to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, June 24, 1794," Ibid., p. 266.

The closeness of the friendship between Priestley and Winchester is seen in the account of a Mrs. Hart of Exeter, written in 1822 to her brother, Samuel Hart. Mrs. Hart had been one of Priestley's congregation in Philadelphia. She wrote of Winchester's relationship to Priestley:

> It is ever a pleasure to me to reflect on the character of the late Mr. Winchester, in which were combined uniformity of Christian conduct and deportment, with great urbanity and benevolence of heart; and what renders his memory peculiarly estimable to me, was that artlessness of manners, singularly his own, and an unaffected liberality which he manifested towards Dr. Priestley, the first winter the Doctor came down to Philadelphia to preach, and for which I was quite unprepared.
>
> ...Mr. Winchester was never absent, and he constantly gave out the hymns when that excellent man, Dr. P. did not read them himself.
>
> On the floor, directly in front of the pulpit, and close to it, was placed a long seat, with backs and arms, and a table before it: on this seat, which was generally occupied by elderly men, members of the Universalist Society, Mr. Winchester would take his place, unless he went into the pulpit with the Doctor, it being large enough to hold several: this I need not say was a mark of friendly-heartedness and liberality, and, in fact, gave umbrage, together with his acting as the Doctor's clerk, to some of his own people.[63]

After assisting Priestley in the Unitarian worship service in the morning, Winchester would preach in the afternoons and evenings, with Priestley attending as a member of his congregation. On one occasion Priestley indicated that the next Sunday he would preach on Unitarianism. Winchester then notified the congregation that that next

---

[62] "Letter to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, February 12, 1796," Ibid., p. 333.

[63] Joseph Priestley, "Memoirs," Ibid., p. 333.

Sunday evening he would preach on the doctrine of the Trinity.[64]

Richard Eddy noted that in the course of his preaching at Winchester's meeting house, Priestley proclaimed his belief in universal salvation. The assumption is that through the influence of Winchester, Priestley was led to adopt universalism. Lloyd Chapin stated that Priestley had believed in annihilation up to this time when he declared his belief in universal salvation.[65] A careful reading of Priestley's works and correspondence reveals that Eddy and Chapin were mistaken. Priestley had toyed with the universal salvation long before he met Winchester. His works show that he was trying to work out a solution to the general problem of the final state of the wicked. It is true, however, that Winchester did play an important role in helping Priestley decide in favor of restoration, even though he did not settle in that belief until a few months prior to his death.

In 1772, Priestley wrote his Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion. In the section entitled "Of the Future Expectations of Mankind," Priestley said that on the basis of natural religion there is no reason to expect life after death.[66] If there were another life after death, virtue would be rewarded in it and sin punished. That punishment, however, would not be infinite because man was guilty of finite sin. With his doctrine of finite sin he ruled out endless punishment. Besides, the motive of terror in endless punishment is not really a deterrent against sin, so limited punishment is not a problem.

---

[64] Ibid., pp. 344-345.

[65] J. H. Allen and Richard Eddy, A History of the Unitarians and Universalists in the United States (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1894), pp. 419-420; Lloyd Chapin, The Theology of Joseph Priestley (Unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary; New York, 1967), pp. 28, 174-175.

[66] Joseph Priestley, Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion, 1772-1773, in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, II, 59.

After his discourse into the possibility of limited punishment, Priestley concluded that the annihilation of the wicked is much more agreeable to the analogy of nature:

> As the greater part of natural productions never arrive at their proper maturity, but perish long before they have attained it, so the bulk of mankind, who never attain to any high degrees of wisdom or virtue, should finally perish also, and be entirely blotted out of the creation, as unworthy to continue in it; while the few who are wise and virtuous, like full ripe fruits, are reserved for future use. And there is something so dreadful in the idea of annihilation, as will, perhaps, affect the mind of some persons more than the fear of future torments, with continuance of life, and consequently, with secret hope.[67]

In Part 3 of the Institutes, Priestley considered the future state of man based on the doctrines of revealed religion. Natural religion, he said, left us with an uncertainty whether or not man would survive the grave. Supposing man did survive, natural religion led us to conclude that good would be rewarded and sin punished according to the degree of sin. Now Priestley suggested several alternatives to that supposition. One could suppose either the extinction of the wicked or future punishment which leads to the reformation of the sinner. Revelation teaches us the certainty of a future state and that it will be a state of retribution based on man's work. The precise nature and end of the future state are still uncertain even through revelation.[68]

---

[67] Ibid., p. 64.

[68] Ibid., p. 135.

The uncertainty of Priestley concerning limited punishment is reflected in The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated, written in 1777. Priestley got his doctrine of necessity along with his associational psychology from David Hartley, a prominent physician and chemist. The doctrine of necessity supports the belief in the greatest possible good for all of God's creatures. The everlasting misery of men could not possibly be reconciled with the good of all men. All future evils like those in this life are intended to be corrective ending in the ultimate happiness of man. Although still maintaining annihilation, Priestley indicated that the necessarian might lean toward universal salvation:

> The Necessarian, therefore, though he may admit the annihilation of the wicked, yet since they are to have the benefit of the general resurrection, together with the righteous, and we have no account of any death afterwards, but are assured, on the contrary, that all will be equally immortal, he will lean strongly to the belief of the everlasting ultimate happiness of all; and this is an idea most sublime and glorious, and which cannot but have the happiest effect upon the mind at present.[69]

This section of The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated is concluded with a brief reference to David Hartley's Observations On Man, which was first published in London in 1749. If Hartley is read without prejudice, Priestley said, the reader will be influenced in favor of the final restoration of all men. Hartley indicated that in God self-interest, benevolence, and pity combine to exalt man. God intends the ultimate unlimited happiness of man. Man should not be concerned so much about the when or where or how, he should simply affirm that all anxieties, vices and miseries that he experiences and sees will finally end in unbounded knowledge, virtue, and happiness. Hartley said: "The progress of every individual in his passage through an eternal life, is from imperfect to perfect, particular to general, less to greater, finite to infinite, and from the creature to the creator."[70]

---

[69] Joseph Priestley, The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated, 1777, in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, III, 514-515.

Priestley insisted that the Calvinist usually believes God will inflict eternal suffering upon the wicked. In contrast the Necessarian usually believes that all punishments in the future, like those of the present, are intended for the good of man. In a letter to Rev. Thomas Belsham, Priestley called the restorationists in America "Calvinist Necessarians."[71]

In Notes on the New Testament, published posthumously in 1804, Priestley again affirmed his belief in the doctrine of annihilation.[72] In the same work Priestley affirmed the doctrine of limited punishment pointing out, however, that it is based on reason not on the scripture. Winchester would have taken exception.

All the hope, therefore, that we can entertain of the

---

[70] Ibid., p. 515. The importance which Priestley attached to Hartley's Observations on Man is indicated by the fact that he quoted the same section on ultimate happiness again in Unitarianism Explained and Defended, 1796, in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, XVI, 489.

[71] "Letter to Rev. Thomas Belsham, November 4, 1796," in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 361-362.

[72] Joseph Priestley, Notes on the New Testament, 1804, in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, XIV, 508.

> final restoration of the wicked, by means of a course of discipline in a future state, is derived from other reasons than scriptural ones, such as the improbability of their being brought to life again for the mere purpose of being annihilated, or if they be raised for the sake of punishment, from the natural effect of punishment continued in a sufficient time, which is always instruction and reformation; the most depraved, being naturally capable of being reformed by discipline judiciously applied. It also appears harsh in the conduct of the Divine Being, who must be supposed incapable of every sentiment of malevolence, but who on the contrary must wish the happiness of every being that he has brought into existence, and of whom he is the true parent, to make some men the instruments in the great plan of his providence, and after subjecting them to much misery, to cast them away forever; for there can be no doubt, but that all evil, moral as well as natural, is ultimately subservient to the greatest good. Otherwise, it could never have been permitted in the works of an infinitely benevolent and infinitely powerful God.[73]

Writing to Thomas Belsham, Priestley said that he thought Hartley was wrong to use so many arguments from scripture to support universal restoration. He indicated that the Americans who favor universal restoration likewise depend upon arguments from scripture to support their doctrine.[74]

In the course of his preaching at the Universalist meeting house in Philadelphia, Priestley published two important works. Discourses Relating to the Evidences of Revealed Religion emphasized that the most important article of the Christian faith is the doctrine of a future life which is founded on the scripture doctrine of resurrection. The time, place, and manner of the resurrection, however, are not so important as the affirmation of the resurrection.[75]

---

[73] Ibid., pp. 509-510.

[74] "Letter to Rev. Thomas Belsham, November 4, 1796," in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, Vol. I, Part II, p. 361.

The second of the two works published in 1796 is the more important for our consideration. In it Priestley declared his agreement with Winchester and the Universalist congregation concerning the final happiness of the entire human race:

> Having thus given an account of my faith with respect to articles of the greatest secondary importance, I should take the liberty...to express my concurrence with the minister, and the congregation worshipping here, in their opinion concerning the final happiness of all the human race, a doctrine eminently calculated to promote alike, gratitude to God, and benevolence to man, and consequently, every other virtue; and since this doctrine is perfectly consistent with the belief of the adequate punishment of all sin, it is far from giving any encouragement to sinners.[76]

In affirming the final restoration as taught by Winchester, Priestley also rejected endless punishment and the doctrine of annihilation.[77]

Priestley was not yet fully confirmed in his belief in Universal Restoration. His doubts are revealed in a letter to Thomas Belsham, November 4, 1796.

> Though you see and say that I am re-settled in "the orthodox doctrine of Universal Restitution," I cannot say that I am at all times free from doubt, but they grow less and less, and my earnest wishes may have contributed something to fix my opinion.[78]

---

[75] Joseph Priestley, Discourses Relating to the Evidences of Revealed Religion (Philadelphia: Printed by John Thompson, 1796), pp. 208-211.

[76] Joseph Priestley, Unitarianism Explained and Defended, 1796, in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, XVI, 487.

[77] Ibid., p. 488.

[78] "Letter to Rev. Thomas Belsham, November 4, 1796," in J. T. Rutt, Joseph Priestley, Vol. I, Part II, p. 361.

In a subsequent letter to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, October 2, 1801, Priestley indicated that it was impossible for him to conceive of a being with such immense power and wisdom who could treat his creatures in any manner which would be against their well being. God's benevolence, he insisted, would be opposed to that. Even the worst of mankind, he continued, must ultimately be reclaimed.[79] A few months before his death he wrote to Lindsey again indicating that he now fully subscribed to the doctrine of Restoration.

> The firm faith that you and I have that even the wicked, after a state of wholesome discipline, (and that not more severe than will be necessary) will be raised in due time, to a state of happiness, greatly diminishes our concern on their account.[80]

It is clear that Priestley did not adopt the doctrine of universal salvation simply from his contact with Winchester. The part that David Hartley played and his search through natural and revealed religion must not be overlooked. It was a long and difficult struggle for Priestley. That his contact with Winchester had a decided effect upon his declaration of belief in universal restoration cannot be doubted.

Unitarian Universalists

Toward the end of the eighteenth century Universalism took on a new complexion with the adoption of unitarian theology. Among those affected by Winchester's ministry in England was the Rev. William Vidler.

---

[79] "Letter to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, October 2, 1801," Ibid., p. 469.

[80] "Letter to Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, April 9, 1803," in Thomas Belsham, Memoirs of the Late Reverend Theophilus Lindsey (London: Williams and Northgate, 1873), p. 375.

Vidler was born at Battle, in Sussex, England, May 1758. He was converted at the age of twenty-one and joined a Baptist church. The following month he was ordained to the ministry. Through his association with the General Baptists and some of the believers in restoration, he was introduced to the doctrine of the final restoration of all things. His first reaction was one of confusion and doubt. He endeavored to study the question and subsequently read Winchester's works which had a profound effect on him.

In 1792, after having preached for nearly twelve years, he adopted the doctrine of restoration which resulted in the division of his church at Battle, with the majority following him and the minority withdrawing to form a Particular Baptist church. Upon hearing of Vidler's defection many pulpits were closed to him. His church was ejected from the Kent and Sussex Association and he was denied the opportunity to preach the annual sermon which he had been scheduled to deliver at the Association.

Some time after that Vidler had the opportunity to meet Winchester when Winchester visited Battle. That Winchester thought a great deal of Vidler is reflected in his letter to Benjamin Rush, July 26, 1793:

> A Mr. Vidler, of Battle, in Sussex, formerly a Calvinist Baptist minister, has lately with his church been excluded from the connexion of those churches, for the belief and open profession of the same. He was a very popular man amongst them, a good preacher and a man of an excellent character.[81]

Winchester said that he expected great things of Vidler. In

---

[81] "Letter to Benjamin Rush, July 26, 1793," in E. M. Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

February of 1794, Vidler was invited to London to supply Winchester's pulpit. He was there when Winchester left to go to America and was invited by the congregation to become a leader of the Universalists in England. For a few years he edited a periodical entitled The Universalist Miscellany.

The Parliament Court Chapel sought to unite with the General Assembly of the General Baptists in London. Vidler's followers were finally voted into the Assembly by a slight majority on June 8, 1802, at which point the more evangelical churches resigned from the Assembly in protest. His very happy association at the Parliament Court Chapel ended when Vidler rejected the doctrines of the trinity and atonement and became a professed Unitarian.[82] His deviation caused the withdrawal of many of the Universalists and set a Unitarian direction for the society from which it never deviated. In subsequent years the chapel became the South Place Ethical Society.

In his sermons Designs of the Death of Christ, Vidler indicated that the death of Christ is the central fact of revelation upon which the whole of Christianity depends. In this sermon he reflected Winchester's ideas, particularly as found in the poem The Process and Empire of Christ. Christ died, Vidler asserted, that whoever believes might be saved from the second death. Christ died to fulfill the prophecies which related to his appearance on earth, to sanctify the church, and to take away the fear of death from his people. Christ died to become the life of the world uniting Jews and Gentiles in one body and demonstrating that God loves every man. In order to gain universal power Christ had to die. He died to take away the sins of the world and lay the foundation for universal reconciliation to God. His empire cannot be overthrown by sin or death.[83]

---

[82] For details of Vidler's life see Stone, Biography of Winchester, pp. 209-219; see also W. T. Whitley, The Baptists of London, p. 71.

Following Winchester, Vidler preached a long disciplinary punishment in a future state of existence. He believed that the doctrine of restoration would combat infidelity as neither Arminianism nor Calvinism could. The Arminian preaches to all but must admit that Christ will not atone for millions for whom his blood was shed. The Calvinist cannot preach freely to all men because he believes God's mercy is intended only for a few.[84] Of the inevitable tension and conflict between the Calvinists and Arminians, he said:

> Candid and serious minds have given up the controversy as endless and hopeless, and sit down with a _part of the scriptures only_ in their possession, not being able to understand the rest. The result of everything is, that a path is prepared for infidelity, which is coming in as an overwhelming flood, nor is it possible for Calvinism or Arminianism effectually to withstand it, as neither of these systems embrace the whole of revelation. Nothing but the full display of grace to _all men_ in Christ Jesus, --nothing but the sovereign discovery of the character of the "living God, as the _restorer of all men_, but especially of those that believe," can suit the wants of the present day.[85]

Some of the Universalists in London published in 1798 a tract entitled "An Address to Candid and Serious Men, By Some Friends of Mankind," which was an attempt to show the unscriptural parts of the Calvinist, Arminian, and Deists systems. A Mr. Fisher, a Calvinist, wrote a reply to that tract, indicating that he believed the Universalists were substituting hell-fire for the blood of Christ, the same objection which had been given to Winchester. In response to Fisher, Vidler wrote in 1799, God's Love to His Creatures, in which he answered the accusation that Universalists contribute to infidelity and are in reality friends of the Devil, rather than friends of mankind as they claimed to be. Vidler took occasion to show that they were not the same mind as the Deists who gave up the doctrine of revelation. By giving up revelation, Vidler said, they are forced to give up reason also. According to Vidler the Deists' ideas of the power, wisdom and goodness of God were originally derived from revelation. To surrender revelation would deprive the Deists even of the important truths about the nature of the Deity.[86]

---

[83] William Vidler, _The Designs of the Death of Christ_ (London: Printed for the author, 1795), pp. 5ff.

[84] William Vidler, _God's Love to His Creatures Asserted and Vindicated_ (London: Printed by W. Burton, 1799), pp. 29f.

[85] William Vidler, _A Sketch of the Life of Elhanan Winchester_, pp. 21, 49-50.

After Winchester left England and Vidler took over the leadership of the Universalists, there seemed to be a decline in the growth of Universalism. It was in part due to Vidler's adoption of Unitarian theology. Commenting on the spread of Universalism around the end of the century, Vidler said that many of the friends of Universalism were alarmed that it seemed not to be increasing any more and feared that it was really on the decline. Vidler remarked that now that Winchester's personality was no longer the main attraction and the novelty of universal restoration was passed, there were not so many converts as there had been before. However, he did mention that there were other Universalist congregations in England at Wisbeach, at Northiam in Sussex, at Rolvenden in Kent, and at Brighthelmstone. There was the possibility that one would soon be formed at Chatham.[87]

---

[86] William Vidler, God's Love to His Creatures, pp. 7-8.

Vidler believed that if the followers of Universalism could be united it would assist them in making an impact on their society. Though Vidler became the acknowledged leader of the Universalists his Unitarian position became a deterrent to the development of Universalism. The Society took on the complexion of a Unitarian congregation in place of the Trinitarian Universalist point of view which had been followed under Winchester.

Alarmed at the spread of Unitarianism and Universalism under the leadership of Vidler, the Rev. Andrew Fuller took up the pen for the Particular Baptists. Fuller addressed Vidler not as a Universalist but as a Unitarian. His tract entitled The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems, Examined and Compared, as to their Moral Tendency, insisted that Socinianism and infidelity are closely related because they both support the sufficiency of human reason, they are both characterized by a bold, profane and daring spirit, they both appeal to speculative minds, and both generally disregard religion.[88]

Fuller was concerned not simply to point out that there was a relationship between Socinianism and infidelity, but indicated that there was a direct tendency from the one to the other. The Socinians' substitution of reason for the inspiration of the scriptures leads to the rejection of the scriptures. Moreover, the low view of the person of Christ which is implicit in Socinianism lessens the view of sin. He concluded that Socinians have generally moved towards infidelity. "It is not common, I believe, for persons who go over to Socinianism, to go directly from Calvinism, but through one or other of the different stages of Arminianism, or Arianism, or both."[89]

---

[87] William Vidler, A Sketch of the Life of Elhanan Winchester, pp. 98-99.

[88] Andrew Fuller, The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems, Examined and Compared (Philadelphia: Printed by Lang and Ustick, 1796), pp. 296, 303, 310-313.

Unitarian Universalism first appeared in the Philadelphia area when Thomas Dobson, a native of Scotland, came to Philadelphia in 1784. He published Dobson's Encyclopedia and several works on Universalism which he authored. Because of the trinitarianism of the regular Universal Baptists in Philadelphia, Dobson was forced to conduct Unitarian Universalist meetings in Carpenter's Hall.

At New Hanover, New Jersey, 1793, Alice and John Brown donated land and assisted in the building of a Universalist meeting house, to which Abel Sarjent was called to serve as pastor. In June of the same year Sarjent published the first issue of "The Free Universal Magazine." Sarjent's Unitarianism is reflected in the creed which he published:

> We believe that there is one God, and that there is none other but he; that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that the fullness of Godhead is included in this one character, FATHER: that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and

---

[89] Ibid., p. 321.

unchangeable.[90]

Sarjent's creed opposed the adoption of vicarious atonement and imputed righteousness. He rejected the possibility of one man being righteous for the unrighteous. Justice demands, he said, that all obey the command of law. As Christ cannot be happy for us so he cannot suffer for us. Justice required not just punishment, but universal obedience. Jesus satisfied justice and provided for universal obedience. Sarjent had intended to publish subsequent volumes, but because of lack of subscribers, only the first volume was ever published.

Despite the early beginnings in the Philadelphia area it was in New England where Unitarianism took hold of the Universalist movement in the person of Hosea Ballou. Hosea was the son of Maturin Ballou, a Baptist preacher who served charges in Smithfield, Pawtucket, and Scituate, Rhode Island, before becoming the pastor of the Calvinist Baptist Church in Richmond, New Hampshire, in 1770. The next year Hosea was born and brought up in the Calvinist Baptist tradition. When Hosea was nineteen years old many of his friends professed religion and joined his father's church. Hosea decided to join with them in January of 1789. At the time that Ballou joined the Baptist church there was a small group of Universalists meeting in Richmond and in the adjoining town of Warwick, Massachusetts, with Caleb Rich as their preacher. A distant relative of the Ballou family was a Universalist. Hosea mentioned that some of the Universalists attended the Baptist meeting and after the meeting often entered into discussions about their beliefs with the Baptist friends. In the course of the conversations Ballou had reason to question his Calvinism, in particular, the doctrine of election. He concluded that his Calvinism could allow either partial or full salvation. Recalling his turn toward the doctrine of universal salvation, Ballou wrote:

---

[90] Richard Eddy, "Universalist Conventions and Creeds," in *The Universalist Quarterly and General Review*, XV (1878), p. 36. The full creed of Sarjent is published in this article.

> That which more than anything else contributed to turn my thoughts seriously towards the belief of Universal Salvation, was the ardent desires, with which I found myself exercised, that sinners might be brought to repentance and salvation. I found it utterly impossible to bring the feelings of my heart to conform to the doctrine of eternal reprobation; and I was compelled to allow, either that such feelings were sinful, or that my heavenly Father, in giving them to me, had imparted an evidence in favor of the salvation of all men, the force of which I found no means to resist.[91]

The next year he spent the summer in Westfield, New York, where through the concern of his older brother he was led into a conversation with a Baptist minister in an attempt to answer his questions about universal salvation. Elder Brown was unable to give satisfactory answers to the passages presented to him and only grew angry at the continued questioning by Ballou. When he returned home Ballou found that his elder brother by twelve years, David, had openly professed Universalism and had begun preaching it. From that time until he was twenty-one, Hosea spent most of his time with David. Because of his subsequent adoption of Universalism, Hosea was excommunicated along with his brother David.

It was not long before he also gave up the doctrine of the trinity and the traditional notion of atonement, though he indicated that he couldn't say for certain what year he became a Unitarian. He recollected that it was long before he wrote his treatise on atonement.[92] It is probable that by 1795 he was preaching Universalism on a Unitarian foundation. Reverend Edward Turner of Sturbridge, Massachusetts, said that 1795 marked a distinct change in Universalist preaching. He had heard Ballou preaching Unitarianism some time in the course of that year.[93]

---

[91] Hosea Ballou, "Memoir," in Sermons on Important Doctrinal Subjects (Boston: Printed and Published at the Trumpet Office, 1832), p. xii.

In September of 1794 Ballou attended the Universalist convention in Oxford, Massachusetts, where he met Elhanan Winchester for the first time. Winchester had just returned from seven years in England. Ballou was honored to share the pulpit with Winchester as Winchester preached the opening sermon at the convention. Toward the end of his sermon Winchester started talking about ordination, when suddenly he called Ballou forward and proceeded to ordain him, calling others in the congregation to assist. From that time forward Ballou held Winchester in great esteem and affection. Shortly before Winchester died Ballou spent a week with him at his home.

Through Ballou the radical aspects of the Enlightenment entered Universalism. Ballou had been impressed by Ethan Allen, Charles Chauncy, Joseph Priestley, and Ferdinand Petitpierre. It was about the same time that Joseph Priestley came to America that Ballou adopted the doctrine of Unitarianism. The interest Ballou had in Priestley is reflected in the

---

[92] Ibid., xv.

[93] Universalist Quarterly and General Review, VI (January, 1849), pp. 13-14.

Universalist Expositor, which Ballou edited from 1819-1821, in which numerous articles about Priestley appear. Subsequently, Ballou changed from his high Arian view of Jesus to the Socinian position of Priestley. His earlier Arian view of Jesus he may have gotten from Charles Chauncy. ~~Petitpierre's main influence was in the doctrine of benevolence.~~

The primary influence on Ballou, however, was the Deist, Ethan Allen and his Reason, The Only Oracle of Man. Allen had concluded that reason was the tool by which man was to judge all things. Because the trinity was not rational it had to be rejected in favor of Jesus as a finite human being. In addition, Allen rejected the doctrines of the atonement and original sin. Sin, he said, is finite, a deviation from order and reason. Morality, according to Allen, is acquired through reason and experience. Suffering is the way that men overcome their sins and reform their lives.

It will readily be seen in the Treatise On Atonement that Ballou owes many of his views to Allen. While agreeing in the main with Allen he did not go so far as Allen in relationship to the scripture which Ballou continued to insist was the revelation of God. In the interpretation of Jesus, Allen is a modern Unitarian, insisting that Jesus was only a man. Ballou was early an Arian and later a Socinian. Where Allen rejected the doctrine of atonement, Ballou reinterpreted it. Moreover, he found in Allen the virtue of the belief in universal salvation. Allen insisted that the moral government of God is incompatible with endless damnation. God's purpose is the happiness and well-being of all men. Only a despot would punish men interminably. Endless punishment defeats the purpose of God which is to reclaim offenders:

> The ultimate end of God, in creation and providence, [is] to do the greatest possible good and benignity to being in general, and consequently, that the great end and design of punishment, in the divine government, must be to reclaim, restore, and bring revolters from moral rectitude back to embrace it, and be ultimately happy.[94]

Endless punishment, he contended, would indicate imperfection in the creation or moral government of God. The optimism of the Enlightenment in Allen is reflected in his belief that moral goodness and happiness will ultimately be victorious over sin and misery. While punishment is a part of man's life, it is temporary. Ultimately good will succeed.[95]

Ballou's A Treatise on Atonement, published in 1805, is divided into three parts--Sin, Atonement, and the Consequences of Atonement. "Sin," Ballou said, "is the violation of a law which exists in the mind, which law is the imperfect knowledge men have of moral good."[96] Since understanding is finite, sin also is finite and limited, rather than infinite and unlimited. Sin arises from natural evil; it is the work of the flesh. Man sins because he is flesh and spirit.[97]

In order to achieve his purpose in the interpretation of the atonement, it was necessary for Ballou to deny liberty of will in man. Thus, he made God the first cause of sin, but added that sin was intended for good in God's plan. God is the first cause and the moral agent is the second or effective cause of sin.[98] "Man," he said, "is dependant in all his volitions, and moves by necessity."[99] In the atonement, Ballou said, it is not God who needs to be satisfied, but man who needs to be reconciled. God in his benevolence always loved man. Man is reconciled by the operation of God's love for man's good. That good does not consist in endless punishment.

---

[94] Ethan Allen, Reason the Only Oracle of Man (Bennington, Vt.: Printed by Haswell and Russell, 1784), p. 121.

[95] Ibid., pp. 133-136.

[96] Hosea Ballou, A Treatise on Atonement (6th ed.; Boston: A. Tompkins, 1852), p. 15.

[97] Ibid., pp. 32-34.

The essential factors which divided the Wincesterians from the Rellyans, were Arminianism and limited punishment. Ballou adopted the Arminianism of Winchester but rejected the doctrine of limited future punishment. He said that the results of sin are limited to the state in which sin is committed. Thus sin in this life is punished in this life. Any sin to be punished in a future state must be committed in that state.[100] Though he led the Universalists into becoming unitarian, his rejection of future punishment eventually caused dissension among his fellows. Eventually they reaffirmed Winchester's view.

Ballou gives us several reasons for believing in universal salvation. One, there is an immortal desire in every soul for future existence and happiness. Two, all wise, good, and exemplary men wish for the truth of the doctrine of universal happiness. Three, if any part of the human race is miserable, the rest must be on the principle of sympathy. Four, the world is a place of education. Sin is a mistake and men find it out through the experiences of this life. Five, mankind sprang from God and must finally return to God.[101]

---

[98] _Ibid._, pp. 36-37. [99] _Ibid._, p. 64. [100] _Ibid._, 59-60.

The treatise is concluded with a series of scriptures in which he attempts to show that divine revelation is in harmony with reason.

In a letter to Rev. Joseph Buckminster, pastor of the Brattle Street Congregational Church in Boston, Ballou indicated that he believed that Jonathan Edwards and Nathan Strong were acting contrary to the plain teaching of the scripture in restricting salvation to the elect.

> The arguements of Dr. Edwards and Dr. Strong being disposed to represent the divine economy of grace less extensive than the plain and positive promises of God, the testimony of the Prophets, the word of life thro' Christ and the witnessing Apostles have declared it, stand forever refuted by that cloud of witness, as they are also, by the Spirit of Christ in every humble, believing heart. It is far more easy for the rational lover of Christ to believe those learned doctors decision by the vain traditions of the schools, than to believe that the grace of God in Christ Jesus is less extensive than his word and spirit declair it to be.[102]

In the years between 1795 and 1805, Ballou led most of the Universalist clergy into Unitarianism with the notable exception of John Murray and Edward Mitchell. Ballou's Unitarianism brought Universalism away from Calvinism and Rellyanism and put it on more rationalistic grounds.

There were few attempts on the part of the orthodox clergy to answer Ballou. When orthodox men like Chauncy preached the doctrine of universal salvation, they were alarmed. But when Universalism became identified with Unitarianism through Ballou, the way to answer

---

[101] *Ibid.*, pp. 178-185.

[102] Hosea Ballou, Letter to Rev. Joseph Buckminster, Jan. 11, 1810.

Universalism was to answer Unitarianism, the more dangerous of the two. As long as Universalism was pietistic and orthodox in other respects it was a threat to the orthodox churches. When it became more rationalistic and adopted the notion that there was no future punishment for sin, it no longer posed the threat that it had previously. It was evident that the scriptures taught that there was future punishment.

Abner Kneeland became famous as a Universalist, an Owenite, and an atheist. In 1801 he joined the Baptist church in Putney, Vermont, where he did some preaching. He remained there until March of 1803 when he left because he had adopted the doctrine of restoration of all men through his reading of Winchester's works. An ardent Winchesterian, Kneeland later became a staunch admirer of Hosea Ballou and adopted his theological position. In September 1803, Kneeland joined the General Convention of Universalists and was called as the Universalist preacher at Langdon, New Hampshire. He remained there until 1811 when he removed to Charlestown, Massachusetts.

While at Charlestown he began to have doubts concerning the divine inspiration of the scriptures and carried on extensive correspondence with his friend Hosea Ballou. The correspondence was published in 1816 as A Series of Letters in Defense of Divine Revelation. By 1817 with his doubts resolved he resumed preaching at Whitestown, New York.

Kneeland was invited to be the pastor of the Lombard Street Universalist Church in Philadelphia in 1818. He was the first Unitarian to serve as pastor of the Lombard Street Church. There he edited the Christian Messenger from 1819 to 1821, the Philadelphia Universal

Magazine and Christian Messenger from 1821 to 1823, and the Gazeteer in 1824, in all of which he published his liberal views. In 1822 he published a translation of the New Testament. He subsequently became pastor of the Prince Street Universalist Society of New York, in 1825, only to resign after a bitter controversy with the trustees. Supported by his loyal followers, he established the Second Universalist Society in New York.

While in Philadelphia, Kneeland published A Series of Lectures on the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence in 1818. Central to Kneeland's conception of the nature of God is the idea that God is love. All other attributes flow from the centrality of love.[103]

Man, he said, is born into the world totally destitute of moral or religious character. The influence of Locke's philosophy is readily apparent. The moral faculties of man are limited in the same way as his natural faculties. Thus the consequences of his moral actions are limited in the same way that his natural faculties are limited.[104]

In his definition of sin he clearly reflected Ballou's doctrine of sin. Kneeland defined sin as the violation of the law of our own understanding. The law we violate is the law of our own conscience. Thus sin is finite, proceeding from finite causes. The consequence of sin is that man must face a limited punishment which is confined to this life, not to any future state of existence after death.[105]

---

[103] Abner Kneeland, A Series of Lectures on the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence (Philadelphia: Printed for the author by Clark and Raser, 1818), pp. 19-22.

[104] Ibid., pp. 54-56.

[105] Ibid., pp. 70-77, 90.

Rejecting the federalism of Relly, Kneeland adopted Ballou's notion that in atonement or reconciliation instead of satisfaction being paid to God and divine justice, man is reconciled to God through the manifestation of divine love. It is clear that God always loves man. It is man who must be brought to love God.[106]

In another sermon Kneeland maintained that man can only live in Christ and die in Christ if God has given him eternal life. He went on to say that we know that God has given eternal life to all mankind.[107]

For several years Kneeland engaged in fanatical social reform movements in connection with Robert Dale Owen and Frances Wright. As a result of those activities he was discharged from the Second Universalist Society in New York. Near the end of 1827 Kneeland had become the editor of the *Olive Branch* which in 1828 was renamed the *Olive Branch and Christian Inquirer*. In association with Owen and Frances Wright he devoted the magazine to free inquiry, pure morality and rational Christianity.

It was not long before Kneeland was involved in conflict with the Universalists. At a meeting of the Southern Association in Hartford, May 1829, he was about to be suspended when upon the advice of his friend Hosea Ballou, he suspended himself from the fellowship so that it might be possible for him to be reinstated should he so desire.

About that same time he renounced his faith in Christianity and moved to Boston where he became the leader of the First Society of Free Enquirers, lecturing frequently on rationalism. In 1831 he began to expound his pantheistic views in the Boston Investigator. He was indicted for publishing his views about God in the December 20, 1833, issue of The Trumpet, a Universalist paper published by Thomas Whittemore. In the article for which he was charged with blasphemy, Kneeland wrote to Whittemore that though some people thought he was still a Universalist he was not. He still believed in some of the things that the Universalists believed in, such as universal benevolence and charity, and in that regard might be considered a Universalist. He made it clear, however, that he did not believe in punishment after death, nor any future state of conscious existence. He insisted that he was more a Universalist than he was an orthodox Christian. The next part of the article stated the ways in which he differed from the Universalists. These statements are the ones which resulted in the charge of blasphemy:

---

[106] *Ibid.*, pp. 91-93, 104-110.

[107] Abner Kneeland, "The Happy Death of the Righteous," in *The Columbian Miscellany* (Keene, N. H.: Printed by John Prentiss, 1804), p. 318.

> Universalists believe in a god which I do not; but believe that their god, with all his moral attributes, (aside from nature itself,) is nothing more than a chimera of their own imagination.
>
> Universalists believe in Christ, which I do not; but believe that the whole story concerning him is as much a fable and a fiction, as that of the god Prometheus, the tragedy of whose death is said to have been acted on the stage in the theatre at Athens, five hundred years before the christian era.[108]

He also denied belief in miracles which he accounted for on natural principles. Neither did he believe in the resurrection of the dead, immortality, or eternal life. No one will ever be eternal. One can believe only in the realities which are based on rational conception.[109]

---

[108] Abner Kneeland, A Review of the Trial, Conviction, and Final Imprisonment of Abner Kneeland (Boston: George A. Chapman, 1838), p. 20.

Three separate charges were lodged against Kneeland in connection with the article, but he was tried for only one: "Universalists believe in a God which I do not." He was charged with blasphemy for denying the existence of God. Kneeland contended that he did not intend to deny the existence of God, but only to deny the Universalists' conception of God.[110]

Kneeland called attention to his "Philosophical Creed" which he had sent to Whittemore asking him to publish it with the article that created the turmoil. In that creed he declared his faith in the existence of God who is the God of nature. The creed is instructive for it shows the full scope of the influence of rationalism on Kneeland:

> I believe in the existence of a universe of suns and planets, among which there is one sun belonging to our planetary system; and that other suns, being more remote, are called stars; but that they are indeed suns to other planetary systems. I believe that the whole universe is NATURE, and that the word NATURE embraces the whole universe, and that God and Nature, so far as we can attach any rational idea to either, are perfectly synonymous terms. Hence I am not an Atheist, but a Pantheist; that is, instead of believing there is no God, I believe that in the abstract all is God; and that all power that is, is in God, and that there is no power except that which proceeds from God. I believe that there can be no will or intelligence where there is no sense; and no sense where there are no organs of sense; and hence, sense, will, and intelligence, is the effect, and not the cause, of organization. I believe in all that logically results from these premises, whether good, bad, or indifferent. Hence, I believe, that God is all in all; and that it is in God we live, move, and have our being; and that the whole duty of man consists in living as long as he

---

[109] *Ibid.*

[110] *Ibid.*, 31.

> can, and in promoting as much happiness as he can while he lives.[111]

Brought to trial in January 1834, Kneeland was convicted, but on appeal was granted a new trial. Two subsequent trials declared him not guilty. In a fourth trial, November, 1835, he was convicted and sentenced to sixty days in jail. Appeals of the conviction held up his confinement until June, 1838.

A petition for pardon was circulated by William Ellery Channing several days after Kneeland was imprisoned. One hundred seventy names were collected including George Ripley, George W. Briggs, A. Bronson Alcott, Theodore Parker, William Lloyd Garrison, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Three Baptist pastors also signed, even though they held conservative views. Theodore Parker wrote to a friend in England about the incident: "Abner was jugged for sixty days; but he will come as beer from a bottle, all foaming, and will make others foam."[112]

The orthodox were concerned about the doctrine of universal restoration believing that it would lead to Unitarianism, Deism, and finally rationalism and the rejection of Christianity. In Abner Kneeland their worst expectations were realized.

Although Winchester played a significant role in the development of early Universalism, he differed radically from Murray, Huntington, and the other Rellyan Universalists. They based universal salvation on the extension of election from a few to all in contrast to Winchester in whose thought restoration sprang from the very nature of God which is love. Further, the Rellyans emphasized punishment in this life instead of future punishment. They saw the atonement as the satisfaction of strict justice rather than through disciplinary punishment in a future life. Chauncy was in substantial accord with Winchester in seeing salvation dependent on divine benevolence and in emphasizing the role of punishment leading to the reformation of man's moral character. The assistance Winchester gave the Unitarian movement was a by-product of his main concern. His friendship with Priestley helped Priestley finally adopt universal restoration and establish the Unitarian church in Philadelphia. In England, Vidler became a Universalist through contact with Winchester. Subsequently, he became a Unitarian and led that movement while maintaining his belief in universal restoration. The Ballou that Winchester ordained was not the one he eventually became. Winchester with his insistence on the primacy of revelation over reason would have been appalled by the rationalistic direction taken by the Unitarian Universalists.

---

[111] Ibid., p. 21.

[112] "Letter to George Ellis, August 7, 1838," in F. B. Sanborn and W. T. Harris, A. Bronson Alcott: His Life and Philosophy, 2 Vols. (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1893), p. 281.

CHAPTER VI

LEGACY

Universalism

In May of 1790 the followers of Winchester and those of Murray joined together to establish the First Universalist Church in Philadelphia. The articles of faith they adopted on that occasion affirmed their belief in revelation, the trinity, the sustitutionary atonement, restoration and the nature of God as love.

> Of the Holy Scriptures
>
> We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to contain a revelation of the perfections and will of God and the rule of faith and practice,
>
> Of the Supreme Being
>
> We believe in One God, infinite in all his perfections; and that these perfections are all modifications of infinite, adorable, incomprehensible and unchangeable love,
>
> Of the Mediator
>
> We believe that there is One Mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily who, by giving himself a ransom for all hath redeemed them to God by his blood; and who, by the merit of his death and the efficacy of his spirit, will finally restore the whole human race to happiness,
>
> Of the Holy Ghost
>
> We believe in the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to make known to sinners the truth of their salvation, through the medium of the holy scriptures, and to reconcile the hearts of the children to God, and thereby, to dispose them to genuine holiness,

Of Good Works

> We believe in the obligation of the moral law, as the rule of life; and we hold that the love of God, manifested to man in a Redeemer, is the best means of producing obedience to that law, and promoting a holy, active and useful life.[1]

Membership in the Universalist Church was restricted to those who would subscribe to the general articles of faith and who "lead sober and moral lives."[2] To depart from the articles of faith or to be guilty of immoral life would constitute reason for private admonition by the minister or another member. The section on membership said:

> If what we conceive to be error, or if what all Christian Churches agree to be vice, be persisted in, the offending Member shall be admonished a second time by any two or three Members of the Church. If after these steps he continue disobedient, his name shall be publickly erased from the list of members, but he shall be exhorted at the same time to attend public worship, and the preaching of the Gospel, and he shall be restored in love after he exhibits such signs of a return to his former faith or practice as shall be deemed satisfactory to the Church.[3]

Not only did the articles of faith provide for a great deal of latitude, the plan of government also provided for diversity of opinion on matters such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, confirmation, footwashing, love feasts, and anointing the sick with oil. No agreement was necessary on any of these in order to be a member of the church in good standing. If a member desired to have any of the ordinances performed he would simply approach the pastor. If the pastor did not believe in performing that particular ordinance, a neighboring pastor would be called who did agree. Each church was further empowered to appoint one member to administer any of the ordinances.[4]

---

[1] "Articles of Faith," in the Register of the Universalist Church, Commencing 1801, pp. 15-17.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

In addition to the articles of faith and the plan of church government, the Philadelphia Convention presented five recommendations. The first recommendation dealt with the subject of war. A defensive war, they said, may be considered lawful, but every attempt should be made to cultivate peace and brotherly love. A second recommendation concerned going to law. Members of the Universalist Church were not to go to the courts of law to settle disputes among their fellow members. Arbitrators were to be appointed by both parties to hear their cases. The third recommendation concerned the holding of slaves:

> We believe it to be inconsistent with the Union of the human race in a common Saviour, and the obligations to mutual and impartial love which flow from the Union, to hold any part of our fellow-creatures in bondage. We therefore recommend a total refraining from the African trade, and the adoption of prudent measures for the gradual abolition of the slavery of the negroes of our country, and for the instruction and education of their children in English literature, and in the principles of the Gospel.[5]

In addition to the foregoing recommendations, a further recommendation concerned refraining from giving oaths. Oaths lessen the frequency of truth and are contrary to the commands of Jesus and the apostle James. The final recommendation concerned submission to government for conscience sake.

Within the ranks of the early Universalists there was considerable concern for the education of the Negro as well as for his gradual abolition. One of the incorporators of the First Universalist Church in 1801 was Amy Scott of African background, a woman highly regarded for her devotion and piety.[6] Although there was considerable interest on the part of some in support of the abolition of slavery, the Second Universalist Church, on May 14, 1839, refused the use of the church facilities to the Anti-slavery League because of public sentiment against the League.

---

[4] Abel C. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 150-151. [5] Ibid., p. 149.

After the organization of the First Universalist Church in Philadelphia, Universalism continued to spread rapidly until there were small groups of believers in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

In the Philadelphia area, centers of Universalism were located in Reading, and Easton, and in New Jersey in Hightstown, the Potter church at Good Luck, and Waretown. Around 1785 Universalism had its beginnings in New York state. Two doctors, William Pitt Smith and Joseph Young, played important roles in the beginnings of Universalism there. When Abel Sarjent left New Jersey he went to New York. Abner Kneeland left Philadelphia and went to New York where he was pastor of the Prince Street Universalist Society and subsequently organized the Second Universalist Society with a large minority group from the Prince Street church. Four other Universalist societies were organized between 1833 and 1851, as well as a society in Harlem and others in Brooklyn. By 1800 there were some thirty or thirty-five Universalist preachers scattered throughout New England, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia.[7]

---

[6] Ibid., p. 64.

Robert Baird published in 1845 what is believed to be the first general work on religion in America in which he related the origin and progress of the various denominations. Referring to Universalism Baird wrote:

> In 1801 there were but twenty-two avowed Universalist preachers; they now state their numbers to be as follows: a General Convention, twelve State Conventions, fifty-nine Associations, 540 preachers, 550 meeting-houses, 875 societies, and 600,000 of the population under their influence. The last item, we suspect, is much too high. Their congregations are mostly small, and many attend from mere curiosity.[8]

In addition, Baird indicated that the Universalists claimed three or four schools, a university in Vermont and some twenty newspapers.

Beginning with the Convention in 1790, conventions continued yearly till 1809. By 1805 there were three branches of the convention--the Northern Association located in central Vermont, the Western Association in central New York, and the Eastern Association around Portland, Maine.[9] In 1829 the Philadelphia and New York Association separated and formed separate associations. In 1834 the Union Association was organized with Reading as its center. In 1850 the Philadelphia Association and the Union Association were combined to create the Philadelphia Union

---

[7] Richard Eddy, op. cit., pp. 542-544.

[8] Robert Baird, Religion in America (New-York: Published by Harper and Brothers, 1845), p. 282.

[9] Hosea Ballou, 2d, "Dogmatic and Religious History of Universalism in America," in The Universalist Quarterly and General Review, V (1848), 103.

Association. In 1832 the Pennsylvania State Convention was organized.

The First Universalist Church in Philadelphia continued its worship at the Mason's Lodge until 1796. In July, 1793, a lot was purchased on Lombard Street and a new meeting house was erected there. When Winchester returned in 1794 after nearly seven years in England, he took over the pastorate of the First Church and remained there until 1796 when he was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Jones, who came from England to accept the pastoral responsibilities.

In 1801 the church was officially incorporated under the name of the "First Independent Church of Christ commonly called Universalists, meeting in their house of worship in Lombard street in the City of Philadelphia."[10] The name was subsequently changed to the First Universalist Church in 1842.

After Jones left in 1804 the church was without a pastor until Noah Murray came in 1807 and remained for a brief time. After three others had served as pastor, Abner Kneeland became the pastor in 1818 and remained there until 1824. In 1829 after four others had served, Abel C. Thomas pastored the church for ten years. In 1848 he returned as pastor until 1863. He was succeeded by Richard Eddy who served for five years. The church continued its ministry until the year 1880 when the last service was held on June 27th. Sunday School sessions which had started in 1812 were revived in 1834 and continued until December,

---

[10] "Articles of Incorporation," in the Register of the Universalist Church, Commencing 1801.

1881.[11]

Although the church had agreed in December, 1881, to sell the property, it was not sold until 1887. The church's assets were transferred to the trustees of the Pennsylvania Universalist Convention as a trust fund for denominational purposes. On May 8, 1893, the last meeting of the First Universalist Church of Philadelphia was held.

While he was serving as pastor of the First Church in Philadelphia, Abner Kneeland proposed the establishment of the Second Universalist Church on February 15, 1820. On October 20, 1823, while he was continuing as pastor of the First Church, he was called also to pastor the Second Church, assisted by Rev. William Morse. The Berean Society was formed in 1821 to hold discussions on the subject of Universalism.

A brief period of prosperity in the years 1840-1844 characterized the Universalists in Philadelphia. Shortly thereafter decline set in which was to continue until the closing of the Universalist churches in the Philadelphia area.

Universalism went through several significant changes in its theological outlook. The Philadelphia Confession of 1790 was significant for its trinitarian emphasis. Nothing, however, had been written in that confession concerning future punishment. In 1791 a strong protest was lodged against the doctrine of no future punishment and the restoration doctrine was affirmed on the basis of the limited punishment which had been taught by Stonehouse, Chauncy, and Winchester.[12] That same year the Boston church wanted their articles to emphasize the divinity of Christ more than the Philadelphia Confession did. That confession contained no explicit reference to the divinity of Christ. The New Jersey churches, in 1792, adopted a lengthy creed which clearly stated Unitarian views. The first article dealt with God the Creator and reflected the influence of the Unitarian Universalist, Abel Sarjent: "We believe that there is one God, and that there is none other than he; that there is but one person in the Godhead, and that the fullness of Godhead is included in this one character, FATHER." The article on the mediator read: "We believe that there is one mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus." The capitalization of the word shows the emphasis that Sarjent was endeavoring to give. The fifth article spells out the Unitarian position more clearly as it speaks of the fullness of the Godhead in the Father and the fullness of human nature in the Son, although it also maintains the union of two natures in Christ.[13]

---

[11] "A Brief Historical Sketch," in the Register of the Universalist Church, Commencing 1801.

The Portsmouth, New Hampshire, society in May of 1796, adopted a testimony of belief that is similar to the Winchester Confession which was adopted by the General Convention in 1803. At the same time that the Portsmouth Society was adopting their confession, another group which had withdrawn from the Methodist Church in New York and established a Universalist church adopted articles of belief similar to those of the

---

[12] Richard Eddy, "Universalist Conventions and Creeds," in _The Universalist Quarterly and General Review_, XII (1875), 202-203.

[13] _Ibid._, XV (1878), 36-38.

Boston church. The General Convention of Universalists meeting in Winchester, New Hampshire, in 1803, adopted the Winchester Confession. The convention attempted to reduce the essentials of the faith to the lowest possible terms in order to provide for variety of belief. The Universalist faith was expressed in three statements:

> Article I. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God, and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.
>
> Article II. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.
>
> Article III. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works, for these things are good and profitable unto men.[14]

Rev. Nathaniel Stacy, who voted for the adoption of the Winchester Confession, moved to New York and helped organize several societies there. The Winchester Confession was incorporated into their constitution. The Western Association subsequently adopted it in 1807, although it had been adopted previously by many of the churches as they organized.

Through the years a number of restorationists were concerned that there were others in the society preaching that there was no punishment after this life. In 1831 that group seceded and started the Massachusetts Association of Universal Restorationists. It was founded by eight clergymen and at its peak numbered only thirty-one ministers.

---

[14] "The Winchester Confession," in the Register of the Universalist Church, Commencing 1801.

The five hundred other ministers of the Universalist denomination remained together with their divergences of opinion on the doctrine of future punishment. After the dissolution of the Restorationist Association in 1841, most of the seceders returned to the Universalist denomination. Some, however, joined the Unitarians, and others simply engaged in reform movements such as the anti-slavery movement.

By the time the Restorationist controversy had ended, most of the Universalists had swung over to favor restorationism in some form or another in place of Ballou's idea of no future punishment. In 1878 the Boston Universalist ministers voted thirty-three to two in favor of a statement which reflected the doctrine of restoration. The statement said that the wicked would not go unpunished but God would have mercy on them. Christ came to save men from sin, they said, not from the punishment of sin. Moreover, they declared that repentance and salvation are not limited to this life. Whenever the sinner turns to God he will be saved. To limit salvation to this life, they insisted, would be to leave some to annihilation or endless misery. They rejected the so-called "death and glory" theory of Ballou and agreed that though they might have differences about future punishment, they could agree that it would not be extremely long and that all men would finally know forgiveness and regeneration. At the height of the Restorationist controversy Robert Baird wrote:

> The only Universalists whose preaching seems to have any moral influence, are the handful of Restorationists--the rest are heard with delight chiefly by the irreligious, the profane, Sabbath-breakers, drunkards, and all haters of evangelical religion. Their preaching positively exercises no reforming influence on the wicked, and what worse can be said

of it.[15]

Hosea Ballou, 2d, pointed out several distinct changes in the doctrinal positions of the Universalists in America. The first important change from the Winchester view occurred around the turn of the century. It was through the influence of Hosea Ballou that the doctrines of the trinity and the vicarious atonement of Christ gave way to Unitarian views on these subjects. Between 1817 and 1824 there was a growing tendency to confine all sin and its consequences to this life. The effect of that teaching was to force out the limited punishment view of Winchester and others. The third important change occurred around 1840. The pendulum began the swing back toward belief in future punishment.[16]

The decline of Universalism in the Philadelphia area was first noticed by Abel Thomas when he became pastor of the First Church, June 1, 1848. The meeting house was in neglected condition and the people were talking about moving to another part of the city. The Fourth Universalist Society which had started in 1842 had long since perished. The Kensington Church was dying. The Second Church which had been begun by Kneeland in 1820 was "in torpor so profound as to justify suspicion of death." The First Church was weakened in 1850 when a number of families from the western part of Philadelphia withdrew and established the

---

[15] Robert Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

[16] Hosea Ballou, 2d, "Dogmatic and Religious History of Universalism in America," in *The Universalist Quarterly and General Review*, V (1848), 80.

Church of the Messiah at Chestnut and 10th Streets.[17] Thomas asked why Universalism declined and answered it with these important observations. First, that it had not persistent organization, second, that the ministers were preachers traveling here and there rather than settled pastors in charge of particular congregations and third, a lack of missionary zeal.

> What is the secret of the visible progress and prosperity of Methodism? Clearly this: the missionary on horseback, with a pair of saddle bags, a change of raiment, a Bible and hymn-book--inspired by the grace of a redeemed life--organizing classes, appointing class-leaders--these growing into local preachers, and stations into living churches--enlarging the borders and strengthening the stakes of Zion on every hand.[18]

Unitarianism

The first Unitarian congregation in America was at the Kings Chapel in Boston. Kings Chapel had belonged to the Church of England. In 1782 when the congregation was without a pastor they called Dr. James Freeman as their reader. He introduced a revised liturgy which left out the doctrine of the trinity. Because of his unitarianism the Bishops refused to ordain him. The affection which the church held for him was reflected in their decision in 1787 to ordain him themselves and withdraw from the Church of England.

When Joseph Priestley came to Philadelphia, he began preaching Unitarianism in Winchester's meeting house. His preaching was so popular that the meeting house was crowded whenever he was present.

---

[17] Abel C. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 125-126.

[18] Ibid., pp. 187-188.

Unitarianism was given a further boost in 1805 with Ballou's publication of his Treatise on Atonement. In 1804, Dr. Henry Ware became president and professor of theology at Harvard College. With the publication of the Memoirs of Lindsey by Thomas Belsham around 1812, many Unitarian letters which had been included were made public. Those who had written those letters were now forced to come out and declare their faith. All the Congregational churches in Boston except Old South and Park Street had become Unitarian. Unitarianism was spreading rapidly in Congregational churches throughout the entire New England area. By 1825 one hundred and twenty Unitarian churches had been established. In 1844 there were two hundred and thirty churches.

In contrast, Unitarianism made little headway in the frontier areas. It flourished for a brief time in Kentucky. Rev. Augustin Easton, the Baptist pastor at Cooper's Run, became a Unitarian and three other churches joined with him.[19] Harry Toulmin the Unitarian Baptist and son of the distinguished English Baptist Unitarian clergyman, Dr. Joshua Toulmin, came to America around 1795 and settled in Lexington, Kentucky. There he accepted the presidency of Transylvania College, but was ousted in 1797 because of his liberal ideas and his close association with the Democrats.[20] The brief swing of Unitarianism into Kentucky was checked by the strong opposition of the Baptists.[21] Unitarianism did not have a great effect on the Baptists because most Baptists were not intellectually equipped to appreciate the sophisticated Unitarian theology. For that very reason Isaac Backus did not feel threatened by that particular movement.[22]

---

[19] David Benedict, op. cit., II, 231.

[20] For the story of Unitarianism in Kentucky see Niels Sonne, Liberal Kentucky 1780-1828 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939).

The First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia was organized on June 12, 1796, by twenty-one British merchants who had brought Unitarianism with them from England. They had come to America to escape persecution for their theological views. Ten other merchants joined them by the end of the first year. The Unitarian Church remained primarily English merchant middle-class. Up to 1800 all the members of the Philadelphia Unitarian church were English families. Joseph Priestley had played an important part in the establishment of that church but had refused to be the pastor. Upon his refusal they tried without success to attract Harry Toulmin from Kentucky. On the advice of Priestley the Unitarians continued under lay leadership from 1796 to 1807, when they called the Rev. William Christie, who had been a merchant in Scotland. Christie was converted to Unitarianism in 1782 and preached in Glasgow. In 1795 he came to America and taught school and preached Unitarianism in Winchester, Virginia. In 1801 he went to Northumberland to be near Priestley, and preached there until February, 1806. The Universalists allowed Christie to preach in their building as Winchester had allowed Priestley to do. On August 23 of that same year, Christie left because of dissatisfaction with him. A small minority went with him and organized the Independent Society of Unitarian Christians which lasted nine months before it was disrupted because of quarreling between Christie and the deacons. After Christie left, the Unitarian church resorted to lay leadership once more.

---

[21] W. B. Posey, The Baptist Church in the Lower Mississippi Valley, 1776-1845 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), pp. 138-319.

[22] W. G. McLoughlin, op. cit., p. 169.

A new building was built by the Unitarians for their worship in 1813. In the year 1813-1824, forty-seven families joined the church. By 1825 there was still only one Unitarian church in Philadelphia.

In 1824, Rev. William Henry Furness was called to be the pastor and served fifty years as the active pastor and twenty-one years as emeritus until his death, January 30, 1896, at ninety-three years of age. Through the years Furness' view of the humanity of Jesus made its imprint on the Unitarians of Philadelphia.

The Unitarians were greatly involved in the reform movements of the early eighteenth century. In particular they shared in the movement of the abolition of slavery, although they did not get into the movement until 1830 when William Ellery Channing took the lead. In 1831 the Philadelphia church took up a collection for the American Colonization Society. Several members joined the Pennsylvania Abolition Society. Furness preached against slavery for the first time in 1839 with the result that several important members of the church reacted strongly to the coupling of abolitionism with Unitarianism. The congregation was divided by the controversy, with twenty-three people protesting and seventy-eight signing a paper of support of Furness for his action.

Unitarianism, like Universalism, did not prosper in Philadelphia. Elizabeth Geffen suggests several reasons. The fact that the church was established with English families rather than native American families contributed to its slow growth. Over the years there was little family continuity in the church. Moreover, the controversial theological issues on which the movement was founded rapidly passed from the scene.[23]

Through the years there was a close relationship between the Unitarians and Universalists because of the Unitarian emphasis of the Universalists and the Universalist belief of the Unitarians. It was not too difficult, therefore, when the Universalist church was looking for a minister to call a Unitarian. Robert Baird wrote:

> The Unitarians have, to a great extent, and it is believed generally, embraced the doctrine of the final salvation of all men. There is, therefore, no doctrinal distinction between the two sects. As Unitarianism is esteemed the more genteel of the two, Universalists are under a strong temptation to change their name and call themselves Unitarians.[24]

Conversations concerning the possibility of the merger of Unitarianism and Universalism began in the early 1900's. It was not until 1961, however, that the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America united to form the Unitarian-Universalist Association.

---

[23] E. M. Geffen, Philadelphia Unitarianism 1796-1861 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961), pp. 239-242.

[24] Robert Baird, op. cit., p. 277.

South Place Ethical Society

In England, the doctrine of universal salvation was adopted by all the Unitarian societies.[25] Winchester's small group of Universal Baptists in England was transformed by his successor, William Vidler, into a Unitarian congregation. Vidler was succeeded in 1816 by Rev. William Johnson Fox, who served as pastor until 1853. The last minister to serve that society was Dr. Moncure Conway, who served from 1864 to 1884, and again from 1892 to 1897. After that time annual lectures were held with guest ministers and other lecturers.

When the South Place Ethical Society met to celebrate their 100th anniversary, the souvenir booklet indicated that they were meeting

> in commemoration of the establishment of a congregation of religious dissenters, under Elhanan Winchester, at Parliament Court Chapel, Artillery Lane, Bishop's Gate, London, on Feb. 14, 1793, from which South Place Ethical Society has directly descended.[26]

William Fox, who succeeded Vidler, had been a strict Calvinist before his conversion to Unitarianism just a few years before he became the minister at the Parliament Court Chapel in 1817. The Parliament Court Chapel later became the South Place Ethical Society. In 1825, Fox helped found the British and Foreign Unitarian Association and served as its first foreign secretary. In 1837 Fox's group was excluded from the Unitarian association and became an independent society. Called

---

[25] J. H. Allen and Richard Eddy, op. cit., p. 354.

[26] M. D. Conway, Centenary History of the South Place Society (Farleigh Press Ltd., Beechwood Works, Beechwood Rise, Watford Herts, 1894).

Fox's Chapel until 1852, it continued to go formally by the name it had adopted in 1825, the Society of Congregation of Protest Dissenters. In 1888 the name was finally changed to the South Place Ethical Society.

Among the tributes to the Society at its 150th celebration in 1943 was a brief letter from Julian Huxley: "The South Place Ethical Society has in its 150 years of life done a great deal to foster that combination of rationalism and the religious spirit which is so necessary for the future of the Society."[27]

Throughout his brief life, Winchester remained a Baptist in piety and theology, except for universal restoration and its effect on the doctrine of atonement. He endeavored to remain as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia. During his years in England he tried to associate himself with the General Baptists. Forced out by the First Baptist Church, declared a heretic by the Philadelphia Baptist Association, and rejected by the General Baptists in England, Winchester established Universal Baptist societies in Philadelphia and London. Through the influence of the rationalistic spirit of the Enlightenment, the Universal Baptists in Philadelphia evolved into the Unitarian-Universalist Church, and in England became the South Place Ethical Society.

It will ever remain a question as to the direction the Universal Baptists might have taken had Winchester lived to an advanced age. Undoubtedly, his orthodox trinitarianism and biblical literalism would have served as a restraint.

---

[27] Souvenir of the Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the South Place Ethical Society (London, February 14, 1943).